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Background information on the composition curriculum prepared by the English Curriculum Study Center at the University of Georgia is given in this book. Specific subjects covered include the theoretical basis, objectives, and structure of the curriculum in written composition for grades K-6; the contributions of anthropology, sociology, and psychology to the understanding of language; the structure of English; and the process of composing. Contributors are Rachel S. Sutton, Emeliza Swain, Wilfrid C. Bailey, Raymond Payne, John M. Smith, Jr., Emily B. Gregory, Dorothea McCarthy, William J. Free, Jane Appleby, and Sue Cromartie. (JS)

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FOUNDATIONS
FOR A CURRICULUM
IN WRITTEN COMPOSITION

ENGLISH CURRICULUM STUDY CENTER

UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA, ATHENS, GEORGIA

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
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FOUNDATIONS FOR A CURRICULUM IN WRITTEN COMPOSITION, K-6

Compiled and Edited by

Emily Gregory
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ENGLISH CURRICULUM STUDY CENTER

University of Georgia   Athens, Georgia

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University of Georgia

January, 1967

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PART I

THEORETICAL BASIS FOR THE CURRICULUM IN WRITTEN COMPOSITION, K-6

Introduction

A curriculum in written composition must be eclectic and dynamic if it is to serve the needs of today's children. The necessity of mastering ever expanding bodies of knowledge and the demand for increasingly specialized skills make imperative flexibility and competency in the learning-teaching processes in all subject fields. Because an individual's language growth is inseparably enmeshed with his cognitive development, the processes through which he develops linguistically are of particular importance. Writing is the most complex of the language skills, involving all of the other skills as well as its own unique conventions. Moreover, the language skills--listening, speaking, reading, writing--involve and are involved in learning in all other subject fields.

The curriculum in written composition for kindergarten through grade six, developed at the English Curriculum Study Center at the University of Georgia is eclectic in that it has incorporated concepts from many disciplines. It is dynamic in that it is concerned with the process as well as with the product of writing and projects a methodology that draws upon the various subject fields of the elementary grades.

The first chapter provides a brief account of the elements basic to curriculum design and of a few research studies that have influenced the thinking of those who have directed the English Curriculum Study Center. Many of the theories touched upon briefly in this chapter are more fully developed in subsequent chapters.

The second chapter, "Basic Tenets for a Curriculum in Written Composition, K-6," attempts to explain how this particular curriculum reveals its designers' sensitivity to the nature of the society it serves, the nature of the learners, and the nature of the discipline. Particular emphasis is given to the nature of the discipline, embracing as it does in this curriculum concepts from many fields: anthropology, sociology, psychology, and linguistics.

The last chapter of Part I, "Rationale for a Curriculum in Written Composition," sets forth the basic ideas which shape and give substance to this curriculum, ideas explained in some detail in chapters four through fifteen. The interrelationships of the concepts from the several disciplines and the pertinence of these concepts to a curriculum in written composition are clear in this concise statement of rationale. Perhaps the capstone of this rationale is the proposition that the composing process has value for the individual quite apart from the value of the finished composition.

CHAPTER I

A BRIEF CONSIDERATION OF CURRICULUM CONSTRUCTION: THEORY AND RELATED RESEARCH*

A curriculum design is a pattern of relationships which exists among the elements of curriculum as they are used to make judgments about the nature of educational experiences for the learner. It has a key function in selecting, organizing, and appraising learning activities and in clarifying the roles of teachers, lay persons, and learners in total curriculum development.

One element in the curriculum design is a statement of values, values of a particular culture, important in education because they give direction to human behavior. In curriculum development, consideration of these basic ideas permits judgments about arrangements of what is to be taught and conditions requisite for learning.

A second element of curriculum design is the statement of objectives consistent with these basic values. Objectives are more than statements of knowledge, skills, and habits. They involve modes of thinking, critical interpretation, emotional reactions, interests, attitudes, perception, intuition, and aspirations. They are general modes of reactions to be developed rather than highly specific habits to be acquired. They are statements of desirable behavioral changes in students and of the substantive area of human experience in which the changes are to take place. A satisfactory formulation of objectives which includes aspects of behavior and content provides specifications of the educational task. It provides criteria for selecting content, learning activities, teaching procedures, and evaluative measures.

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*Dr. Rachel S. Sutton, paper prepared for the English Curriculum Study Center, University of Georgia, 1964.

Inasmuch as learning takes place through the experiences the pupil has, in the reactions he makes to his environment, a third element in curriculum design is the educational experiences that are to be provided so that the objectives will be attained. The teacher can provide educational experiences by setting up an environment and structuring the situation in order to stimulate the desired reaction. The learning experiences should offer the pupil (1) an opportunity to engage in the behaviors suggested by the objective, (2) many experiences appropriate to each objective, and (3) experiences that produce different satisfactions within his range of ability.

Most learning experiences produce multiple outcomes: knowledges, attitudes, and interests. Through effective instruction, the multiple results possible from each experience are realized. Learnings which are congruent reinforce each other; compartmentalized learnings require additional time and may interfere with each other.

The concepts of the discipline constitute a fourth element in curriculum design. Concepts become the organizing elements that provide continuity, sequence, and congruence in learning experiences. Continuity involves a recurring emphasis of the concept in the learner's experience; sequence is provided by increasing the breadth and depth of the concept attained by the learner, and congruence involves relating common elements of a concept as they appear in several subject fields.

Each new experience with the concept involves aspects which go beyond the earlier experiences so that the pupil is continually having to give attention to the new experience in order to make maximum use of it. Sequential learning carried on over months and years makes possible a high level of appreciation of values, understanding, and skill. Each major concept needs to be identified and plans made, in the educational program, for (1) its first introduction, (2) subsequent opportunities for the pupil to deal with it, and (3) experiences which will enable the learner to extend and modify the concept.

Objectives are designed to facilitate identification of certain desirable behavior patterns of the student. Evaluation, a final element in curriculum design, is the process for determining the degree to which changes in behavior are actually taking place. It reveals the kinds and the stability of behavioral changes, the quantity and quality of the pupils' knowledge and skill in the areas specified by the objectives, and his attitudes toward learning.

The source unit is an example of the pattern of relationships which exists among the curriculum elements. It has as its purpose the provision of possible material from which the teacher can choose for a group or an individual. It is a preplan flexible enough to permit modification in the light of needs, interests, and abilities and broad enough in scope to permit selection of appropriate experiences for an individual or a group. Planning continues while the unit is being used. Teacher-pupil planning of particular tasks to be accomplished gives increased understanding and meaning to the learning experience. The source unit includes a statement of major objectives expected to be attained from the kinds of learning experiences outlined, a description of a variety of experiences that can be used in attaining these objectives, and an outline in some detail of the culminating experiences that can be used at the end to help the student integrate and organize what he has obtained from the unit. It indicates also the expected level of development of the major concepts. It includes books and other references, slides, radio programs, pictures, recordings, and the like--all illustrative of the kinds of materials that can be used.

Research on the behavior of children from infancy through age twelve offers assistance in defining objectives. Those studies that identify development in writing patterns of children are helpful in indicating needed changes in curriculum design. Studies that examine extensive samples of children's writing reveal an over-stress on the use of personal experiences, imaginative composition, and letters to the neglect of an emphasis on expository writing that requires the extended development of a single idea or point of view (20, 14, 30).

Children at first use language as a form of play and as an attempt to satisfy other needs (16), feelings, and desires (25). Much attention has been given to grammatical analysis, but little to the developmental changes in conceptual thinking and social drives that lie back of verbal expression (13, 27). Through writing, pupils may project information about themselves useful in guidance of learning (19). Impoverished backgrounds often contribute to a lack of motivation in the use of language and also to subsequent intellectual retardation (12, 9). Language usage is most affected by home and neighborhood and least affected by schooling (10).

Interdisciplinary studies of philosophy, psychology, linguistics, sociology, anthropology, and methodology (8) reveal that eminent scholars who are able to make significant contributions to the substantive reorganization of English have not participated previously in curriculum construction. Consequently, the teaching of composition in the elementary school has often dealt inadequately and incorrectly with pertinent contemporary knowledge. The study further reveals that programs in written composition give little attention to planned sequences in learning; for example, the identification of major concepts, values, and skills to be taught; placement in the program where these are first introduced and dealt with subsequently; and reconstruction of major concepts, values, and skills through continuous experiences. Also, the conditions under which children usually write have not contributed to attitudes about writing that encourage optimum effort and learning.

Sentence completeness is a persistent problem. It is related to the complexity of sentence patterns and thought processes (11, 15). Growth in the power to form complete, concise, balanced, consistent sentences is an index of the growth in clear, accurate thinking (29). Judiciously employed, grammar supports usage instruction (23). Children's use of nouns as names of things and verbs for expressing action is more concrete and specific than adults' (3). In order for a child to make discriminations adequately, he has to comprehend that a word has a relatively stable and self-contained meaning and that it is placed in a sentence which itself has a stable structure (33). Writers of textbooks carefully control the school book vocabulary but seem to have no scheme of introducing various sentence patterns (26). It is also true that certain well known and frequently used tests of language skills show poor discrimination power and can be improved (6).

The formation of ideas involves and is dependent on the process of categorizing. A concept is the network of inferences that are or may be set into play by an act of categorizing (4). Teachers, to the great loss of originality, tend to stereotype their own concepts and to think of a thing in only one approved way (7). Children need ample experience as the basis for concept attainment and explicit guidance in concept formation. They need to be encouraged to form unusual classifications, imaginative groupings, and new combinations (28, 24). Children very early form large abstract categories. Abstraction pushed too fast results in the acquisition of words instead of concepts (18). Composition is a means of clarifying, organizing, and applying ideas gained from reading and discussion (19). Children can be helped to use a wide variety of content and expressive phrasing when not restricted to writing on a prescribed subject (2).

Research indicates that the child from birth builds up schemata of segments of reality. Time and well-planned direction are needed to assist him in integrating his bits of knowledge into an orderly system. Research also suggests the need for a curriculum in written composition designed to include concepts that are variously needed in all basic subjects and a more discriminating understanding of the relationship between words and other symbols of meaning. Research has little to report from longitudinal studies of written language growth patterns of individual children.

CHAPTER II

BASIC TENETS FOR A CURRICULUM IN WRITTEN COMPOSITION, K-6

The curriculum in written composition for the elementary grades developed since 1963 at the English Curriculum Study Center at the University has encompassed concepts from several disciplines: anthropology, sociology, psychology, and linguistics. Representatives of these disciplines and the directors involved in the structuring of the curriculum began with the assumption that much is known about language and about language development that has not yet become a part of curriculum materials and teacher training. In recent years, research in these several disciplines has provided new understandings of the complexity of language development and possible ways of studying language. The first task then was to draw from these disciplines those concepts that seemed most pertinent to the development of skill in written composition in the elementary grades. The second was to formulate general and specific objectives couched in terms that would give direction and unity to the sequential learnings. The third step in developing the curriculum was the ordering of sequential learnings and the sketching in of suggested activities at each grade level (The cooperating public and private schools use traditional grade divisions). Evaluation devices to assess progress and to guide further planning were included in the suggested activities.

The ultimate goal of a curriculum in written composition is the ability to write effectively and to appreciate the value of the process to the composer. Written composition, as the term is used in discussing the curriculum material, involves the formation of ideas, the establishment of purpose and motive for their expression, and the use of skills to express them effectively.

In many elementary schools children are given regular and frequent opportunities to write. But the compositions are limited to casual recounting of everyday happenings, to imaginative flights, or to such functional writing as letters and announcements. Often emphasis on spelling, penmanship, and correct usage obscures the importance of the ordering of ideas and the effective expression of them. The understanding of ideas and the ability to perceive relationships is being stressed in certain subject areas. The material for elementary science developed by the American Association for the Advancement of Science requires first graders to describe a process, with due regard to using words precisely. By the third grade children are taught to distinguish between a statement of fact and an inference about the fact--even further, the statement of mental model or theory that is used to explain the fact (17). The basic goal is to develop in children the ability to use the processes of science, one of which is communication. Herein lies the golden opportunity for the elementary teacher to help children develop concurrently sound concepts about science, written composition, and the nature of the language .

Concern for effective use of learning experiences and for the child's maximum development undergirds the curriculum for written composition developed at the University of Georgia Center. Ideally the teacher helps children use language to enrich every learning experience--in science, math, social studies, art, to develop their ability to think, to express their ideas with increasing skill, and to extend their understanding of the nature of language.

The philosophical basis for this curriculum will be apparent in the discussion of the curriculum in relation to the nature of the society it serves, the nature of the learner, and the nature of the discipline. Without attempting to analyze the many profound ways this curriculum--indeed, any curriculum--has been influenced by the nature of the culture it serves will be noted. Our culture rewards those who are skillful in expressing ideas. A person is judged by the way he expresses his ideas as well as by the quality of the ideas themselves.

Indeed, how can the ideas be appreciated if the expression of them is ineffective? Furthermore, from experience we know the magic cycle: an idea, nebulous and vague at first; the initial, hazy expression of the idea; a later more precise expression; then a modification or extension of the idea or even a tangential idea sparked by the very process of verbalization. It is perhaps natural that the ability to express ideas is associated with the ability to generate ideas. Big business seeks articulate men; advancement is often dependent upon the ability to organize and present data effectively in speaking and in writing. The trend in technical schools toward a broad cultural under-graduate program indicates our belief in the value of having students work with and understand ideas in many areas. Such training has dual values: the student profits from content and process. But it is the latter value that is prized most highly--rightly, of course--in our society. Key positions at every level go to those who have developed the ability to perceive and express relationships among ideas.

In the curriculum in written composition being developed by the Curriculum Study Center at the University of Georgia emphasis is placed on the process as well as on the final product, for understanding of and satisfaction in the writing act have intrinsic values not always manifest in the end product. Obviously, the validity of this statement varies with each writing experience and is dependent upon the form of the writing and the writer's purpose (As the writer matures, form becomes more and more a function of purpose).

The emphasis on process reflects our culture in yet another way: we value the intellectual understanding and practice of a skill, believing that the cognitive approach to such a learning develops optimumally both the skill and the individual. Recent developments in curriculum material in several subject fields point up the importance placed on the cognitive approach. This approach has been noted in the science curriculum materials for the elementary grades. Children are trained to behave as scientists. This emphasis on process is not typical of some other cultures in which the emphasis is upon the ability to carry on an activity according to directions, not upon the ability to state a problem and, through an understanding of basic principles, cope satisfactorily with the problem (31).

The second major consideration in the development of a curriculum is the nature of the learner. Not only must the common, basic needs and interests of children from kindergarten through grade six be considered, but what is known about children's language development must be accommodated. Having determined the ultimate objective: fluent and effective writing, appropriate, sequential learnings must be planned. In the light of current knowledge, what language behavior can be expected at each grade level and what concepts can be taught most efficaciously at each level of development must be determined. The curriculum is designed to ensure that each of the concepts identified as important to the major objective is introduced, emphasized, reinforced and extended. Activities at every level provide opportunities for the child to use written language meaningfully. At least some of the activities should lead to an understanding that language is helpful in making distinctions, in showing relationships, in clarifying attitudes. Although many of the writing experiences are planned within the framework of units in the various content fields--science, art, social studies, at every grade level some units focus on language *per se* or deal with problems that arise in the writing process.

The child's language development is dually related to his environment since both his content, his experiences and his thoughts about those experiences, and his modes of expression are determined by his environment. Recognizing the limiting effect of many home and neighborhood environments, the elementary teacher must engineer a school environment conducive to language development, enriching every experience with appropriate language learnings. Such an environment will foster extension of vocabulary, experimentation in various modes of expression, and sensitivity to rhetorical effectiveness. In the elementary grades language learnings occur most facilely in an environment which provides a variety of models, encourages experimentation, and fosters continuous critical appraisal. The teacher who engineers such an environment must be knowledgeable in many areas. Certainly she should be aware that psychological processes are involved in every step of the composing act. Furthermore, she should understand as much as possible about the traditional, the structural, and the generative grammars, for she may profitably use concepts from all. But, since to write fluently and well one must master the complex symbol system that is our written language, the teacher's prime obligation--at least through grade six--is to provide ample practice in using that symbol system in a variety of situations for a variety of purposes within an environment that challenges children to explore the full potential of that system.

To insist that teachers carefully eschew any systematic, content-oriented study of grammar in the elementary grades does not imply that such study is not important to the teacher. The teacher will use the understandings that come from different methods of language analysis as he works with children to help them develop their ability to express their ideas effectively. Nor is it impossible to teach children the rules and classifications of a particular grammar. The crux of the matter is the time and energy spent in such study. Research studies of children's development suggests that throughout the elementary grades language learnings are, for the most part, syncreticly acquired. To come to some understanding of the nature of language through his own efforts to write effectively and to form his own generalizations about the symbol system that he uses are worthy goals for the elementary child. Moreover, the forming of generalizations will engender a realistic way of thinking about language, for he will be using the methods of the linguist.

For the most part, then, the child's development in written composition is related to and partakes of all other aspects of learning in which he is engaged concurrently. However, in some units specific language learnings will be emphasized, learnings which have been identified as important to maximum language development. In these units the student should be led to make certain generalizations about language and to test the validity of his generalizations. He should be encouraged to extend his generalizations and to use language creatively. His efforts in written composition should provide the experiential foundation for a later understanding of the structure of English. If his teacher is linguistically and semantically knowledgeable, he will begin to develop a vocabulary for discussing problems in syntax and rhetoric. However, elementary children will vary in the rate at which they absorb language concepts. It is not expected that children will learn the terminology of grammar during the elementary grades. Emphasis should be on the development of concepts related to language rather than upon terms and rules.

Both the nature of language learning and the complexity of the discipline argue against any attempt to present a systematic study of English in an effort to improve written composition in the elementary grades. First, because children learn to use language and form ideas about the nature of language from their environment (5, 32, 7), and second, because children's thinking is dominantly syncretic (22, 4), any attempt to teach English as a body of content to be mastered or to analyze sentences apart from content uses valuable time and energy that could be more profitably employed if the ultimate goal is to write fluently and effectively.

Furthermore, the analytic approach to writing violates the nature of the composing process. In any act of communication, the whole determines the various factors--the form, tone, syntax, diction. The teacher who teaches the conventions of the various factors in isolation is apt to lose sight of their raison d'etre and to engender in students a distorted view. The various factors cannot be meaningfully discussed apart from the communication of which they are a part. The holistic is the natural approach for children. There is reason to believe that any other approach, such as an analysis of syntax to correct a usage error, is confusing (1) because it seems to the child irrelevant to his purpose--to communicate an idea.

Effective communication in writing, the last of the language skills to be developed, is really a complexity of skills which requires great effort of the learner and is related inseparably to the other language skills. Thinking, which is sometimes listed with listening, speaking, reading, and writing as if it were separate from and parallel to these skills, is necessarily involved in the use of any one of the communication skills when the skill is consciously and purposefully employed. However, since written composition lends itself to revision, critical analysis, and evaluation, it provides a convenient means of determining development in the ability to perceive relationships, to order ideas, and to communicate them effectively. A curriculum in composition must, therefore, be concerned with the total process, not limited to the final steps of the process. Even at the college level, the student does not begin with the act of writing. He must realize that the establishment of purpose, experiences--real or vicarious, and the cognitive ordering of his ideas must precede the writing act. The elementary child needs opportunities to categorize the phenomena of his environment, to note things that are similar or different, to look for cause and effect relationships, to seek logical explanations (31).

Each of the school subjects emphasizes different aspects of these basic relationships. Thus, every learning activity can provide opportunities for practice in finding the precise words, forming sentences, and composing paragraphs that express the knowledge and ideas derived from experiences.

Moreover, to be maximumly useful in developing language skill each writing must be addressed to a definite receiver, an individual or a group (21). The real or imaginary audience makes it possible for the child to determine tone, point of view, level of generality, and usage. Clearly defined purpose and receiver allow the child to resolve such matters realistically within each writing experience. From time to time he will be able to formulate his own generalizations about these aspects of composition.

In considering the curriculum design in relation to the nature of the discipline, the discipline is interpreted as written composition in the elementary grades. However, the merit of any segment of the total curriculum is determined by the degree to which the objectives and learning experiences of the segment support, complement, anticipate, or reinforce the other segments of the matrix. Thus, on the one hand, we are committed to using each activity for maximum learnings, and in the curriculum design, ways of using writing to enrich various subject units are suggested. On the other hand, we have attempted to identify those concepts which relate to the skills requisite for effective written expression and to understandings necessary to an appreciation of effective expression. A primary concern is that the basic concepts included be so sound that the student need not unlearn but rather will be able to add continuously to these concepts. With every writing experience, then, he acquires meaningful concepts about language and about the process of composing. Each new learning will enable him to develop his skills and to extend his understanding about various aspects of the process.

To use these curriculum materials successfully, the teacher must have some knowledge of recent developments in linguistics and should be familiar with research in the classroom use of materials based on various methods of describing the structure of English. He will be able to work more efficaciously in teacher-to-child situations if he is able to use a variety of approaches. His awareness that language is an arbitrary system of symbolic sounds and that written language in composition is immeasurably complex, involving another symbol system and at least three other distinct systems: the grammatical, the logical, and the rhetorical, will determine his ability to engineer an environment conducive to language development and to respond to children's needs as they seek to extend their ideas and their powers of expression.

Before he comes to school, the normal child has acquired considerable skill in comprehending and speaking the language of his environment. Just as important, he has formed ideas, usually unverbalized, about the nature--particularly the functions--of language. In the first years at school, if not before, he begins to acquire concepts about the relationships between spoken and written communication and to extend his powers of comprehension and expression to include the written symbol system. But the nature of the symbol systems do not concern him immediately. His concern, rightly of course, is with meaning, investing abstract symbols with meaningful referents and abstracting, categorizing, transferring the phenomena of his experiences into the arbitrary symbol systems of his culture. Throughout the elementary grades he needs practice in every part of the composing process: experiencing, cognitive ordering, communicating.

CHAPTER III

RATIONALE FOR A CURRICULUM IN WRITTEN COMPOSITION*

The curriculum of a school draws upon the nature of the society, the nature of the learners, and the nature of knowledge. Recent curriculum changes have been necessitated by rapid expansion of knowledge, new methods used by scholars to seek new knowledge, new applications of knowledge to everyday life and the resultant demand that learning continue throughout life for a large proportion of the population. Continued learning is ensured most efficiently by an understanding of concepts, principles, and generalizations basic to the structure of a field of knowledge.

The curriculum developed at the English Curriculum Study Center of the University of Georgia focusses on the development of competence in written composition in the elementary school, singling out for attention this one aspect of language learning. Written composition is related to other uses of language, exemplifying the concepts, principles, and generalizations about language. Opportunities for the use of written composition are found in all aspects of learning in which the learner is concurrently engaged. Competence in written composition is developed by the individual's involvement, at each opportunity for writing, in a true act of communication, including a writer who has a purpose for saying something to a reader.

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*Dr. Emeliza Swain, paper prepared for the English Curriculum Study Center, University of Georgia, 1966.

Developments in several areas of knowledge about language are basic to the curriculum: contributions of anthropology and sociology to the understanding of language as a social institution; contributions of psychology concerning the interrelations between thought and language, and the nature of children's language learning; new ways of studying the structure of language and new knowledge of the structure of the English language; and descriptions of the process of composing.

Studies of language in different settings emphasize that it is an instrument made by man to serve his purposes in a social group, and that it has a history of changing as his purposes demand. Its written form results in more stability than its spoken form, but it is the very nature of language as a social institution that it continues to change. A curriculum which promotes understanding of the nature of language will encourage students to seek a variety of ways to use language unhampered by the fear of using an "incorrect" form. An historical view of languages and dialects with their similarities and differences may serve as a prime illustration of the richness of cultural variety, and lessen the tendency to take the provincial view that one's own culture is the "right" one, that to be different is to be inferior.

The language environment of the learner determines his initial language development and defines the language he accepts as his own. Interaction among social groups within any large language community necessitates the individual's becoming aware of and proficient in the use of the several dialects of the larger social community. The written form of the language is an essential learning for the individual who participates widely in important social interaction in present society.

There is some evidence to support the frequently expressed belief that there is a two-way relationship between thought and language. It is apparent that language reflects thinking; it also seems probable that putting thoughts into language serves to increase or to limit the quality and clarity of thinking. On the basis of this belief, the curriculum plans require that writing be an integral part of many aspects of the total school experience and that the student be encouraged to find its usefulness in his own independent learning in all fields of study. The frequent use of writing should also encourage his involvement in writing as a part of his personal living, as an aid to making his own experiences meaningful and unique.

The individual learns his language through his experiences with other individuals who use the language. In our society experiences with language begin early and continue throughout the life of the individual. Learning language is, therefore, a continuous process, the rate of learning and the depth of understanding of each individual depending upon the experiences with language in which he actively participates. The school arranges for the learner relatively few of these experiences, but plans these few specifically to result in the maximum learning at a rate suitable for each learner.

The most practical basis for maximum learning from experiences is the development of an understanding of the fundamental principles and structure of a field of experience and knowledge. The individual develops understanding of these principles at successively higher levels by learning of an inductive nature. Words and their arrangements occurring and reoccurring in the context of concrete experiences give them meaning for the hearer. He can be said to "understand" the principles of his language structure when he can use its sounds, words, and arrangements to receive and express meaning. He has generalized this understanding from a number of occurrences, even though he may not be able to state the generalizations. When understanding-in-use has sufficiently developed, he can state principles and see their application in new examples. He continues to deepen and broaden his understanding through conscious application of principles to new instances and further exploration of their full meaning.

School experiences with language are planned to afford him efficacious opportunities to progress through this sequence of learning. The process is enhanced by conscious and deliberate sampling of the full range of instances in which basic principles apply, suitable to his level of language maturity and ability. This sampling occurs in three forms: (1) language experiences that are anticipatory to the understanding of a basic concept or principle and, therefore, build readiness for future learning; (2) language experiences that emphasize the concept or principle, including direct teaching of its operation in English; (3) language experiences that maintain understanding of the concept and provide practice in its use through continued exploration and further application. As a given level of mastery in understanding and use is attained, readiness for a higher level may lead again to direct teaching emphasis, and still further exploration and application. Exploration and maintenance of a concept or principle is expected to involve the pupil's spontaneous attention in his normal use of language. Opportunities for spontaneous attention and directed attention are a part of the curriculum plan.

This description of the process of learning language is taken as applicable to the learning of language in oral and written form and in receptive and expressive uses. Each of these aspects differs from each other; the normal process of learning language, however, appears to combine all four in an interplay, learnings in each supporting subsequent learnings in the others. Speech is the basic form of language and, in normal development, precedes and is necessary to writing, although the differences in the two symbol systems require specific learnings designed for each. Similarly, reception through hearing precedes and supports learning to read.

Some elements typical of the child's learning to receive and express meaning through speech are suggestive of effective ways to teach writing. Prominent in building competence in oral language is the reinforcement of social response when the language is adequate to convey meaning appropriate to the purpose and the social situation. Response to written language is neither so frequent nor so immediate in the child's ordinary experience, and the much greater effort he expends in writing goes largely unrewarded except as the school plans situations in which he receives responses to communications in writing.

American English has been the subject of intensive study by linguistic scholars who have devised new ways of describing its systematic regularities. Several descriptions have been derived from studies of the language in its present form and lead toward more valid description than previous ones based on Latin. The child's curiosity about his environment is the basis of the development of his capacity for intellectual inquiry. Language as an important element of his social environment is a proper subject for study in its own right. The structure of English is introduced as one of many systems which man has devised, capable of being observed and described apart from its meaning and usage. The child may be said to "know" the structure of the language early, in that he comes to school using all the basic structures of the language. Building on his experiences with the system, he learns basic concepts of the parts of the system and the principles that state the relationships among the parts. This curriculum emphasizes the structure of language as an object of curiosity and inquiry in order to stimulate understanding and appreciation of language.

Written language exemplifies the structure of language more clearly than oral; and competence in written composition permits deliberate use of knowledge of structure, from the smallest structural component to the largest, including phonology, morphology, syntax, and rhetoric.

The composing process is a complex pattern of behavior which has been described by composers in various art media. Some characteristics of the process seem to be similar, no matter what the medium of expression. There are elements of the conditions and activities of composing which can be seen in the behavior of the child as he produces a picture, an object, or a piece of writing. Recognition of what he does as he writes allows the child to gain satisfaction in the act of composing.

To attach recognition of value in his writing, the child is encouraged to concentrate on what he has to say, while the teacher supplies the help he needs to say it in writing. Usage of standard English is involved in revising written work for purposes which require this form. His judgment of the suitability of language to situations and purposes will be sharpened by his understanding of language as a social institution serving many purposes. Improvement in the habitual use of standard English is most effectively fostered by an environment in which the child hears and reads language in its most effective form and uses language with satisfaction to share ideas orally and in writing. The student's attention will be directed to usage as effective in serving his purposes, not as having a connotation of "wrong" or "right."

The writer thus builds his own criteria for evaluating and improving effectiveness by analysis of each written composition against his purpose and his reader's response. The teacher participates in this analysis and evaluation so that the learner becomes increasingly able to judge and improve his writing for a variety of purposes and readers.

Competence in written composition is developed by the learner's involvement, at each opportunity for writing, in a true act of communication, including a writer who has a purpose for saying something to a reader. The written dialect of the language is an essential for the individual who participates widely in important social interaction in present society. Understanding the social nature of language will encourage the student to seek a variety of ways to use language unfettered by the fear of not using it the one "correct" way. It seems probable that putting thoughts into language serves to increase or limit the quality and clarity of thinking. Writing as an integral part of all aspects of the total school experience should augment what the individual makes of his own experience. As the reinforcement of social response aids learning oral language, so the school plans situations in which the writer receives response to communication in writing. The writer, with the teacher's participation, evaluates each written composition against his purpose and his reader's response and thus builds his own criteria for improving the effectiveness of his writing.

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PART II

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE STUDY OF LANGUAGE FROM ANTHROPOLOGY AND SOCIOLOGY

Introduction

The teacher of language no less than the linguist is aware that studies which focus on language _per se_ are valuable as one approach to the larger questions of the place of language in culture and the role of language in the development of the individual as a member of a particular society. Between linguistics and anthropology, at least in the United States, a strong bond exists historically. Recent developments indicate an even closer tie between the disciplines and, further, interest in interdisciplinary studies involving linguistics, anthropology, sociology, and psychology. When the focus of interest shifts from the analysis and description of language structure to the use of language by particular groups, language becomes an activity to be studied in its socio-cultural context.

Interest in and methodical study of language is systematized late in the continuum of a people's development. Customs or institutions which systematize other kinds of behavior are rationalized and consciously conventionalized comparatively early. Religion, for instance, gives rise to elaborate rationalizations, such as myths and legends, and conventions, such as rituals, forms of address, hierarchy of practitioners and use of poetic or archaic language, even before a people develop a written language. Perhaps the individualistic nature of language obscures its societal aspects for primitive peoples. The unconscious character of linguistic phenomena makes the language habits of a people a fruitful area of study for the anthropologist, providing insights into fundamental psychological processes.

In attempting to bring together certain understandings about language drawn from anthropology and sociology that are relevant to the teaching of language, arbitrary decisions had to be made about what to include and how to order the ideas presented. It seemed important to include the ideas about the relationship of language to culture that seem fundamental to a proper perspective in the teaching of language, indeed so fundamental that they may well be concepts to be introduced consciously and appropriately at various levels of development.

The chapter on the contributions of anthropology to the study of language briefly considers the relationship between language and culture, defines language as an arbitrary symbolic system agreed upon by a group, emphasizes that it is transmitted like other cultural phenomena and that it changes continuously as the culture of which it is a part changes. The chapter concludes with the question of the interdependence of language and the thought characteristic of a people.

In the chapter on contributions from sociology to the study of language, the emphasis is on language as the key factor in the development of the concept of self as well as in the action and interaction essential to a society. There is some discussion of societal groups characterized by particular language habits--status, occupational, peer, regional. Understanding the nature and uses of dialect may enable teachers to place dialects, particularly those associated with socio-economic and peer groups, in proper perspective. Equally important from the teacher's viewpoint is the understanding that access to the group's culture and interaction among groups in the large language community necessitate ability to use the dialects of the larger social community.

The last chapter of this section focuses on those influences usually acknowledged to be particularly significant in an individual's language development: intelligence, socio-economic class, family, formal preschool training, and race. The five factors are discussed globally, without attempt to analyze the various factors in depth. The author concludes that the language patterns of normal children are established during the preschool years by the language patterns of the significant other people in their environment--parents, siblings, and intimate peers and that Caucasoid-Negroid differences in language patterns reflect differences in cultural environment.

The purpose of this section is to bring together a great many ideas from the fields of anthropology and sociology not normally considered significant in the training of teachers to the end that teachers so oriented will develop the attitudes, attain the knowledge, acquire the skills necessary to guide children's language development. Perhaps teachers will use the ideas and references given in this section as a beginning point and will seek to understand better the ramifications of man's use of language. Properly used, language can be the greatest of mankind's assets. Improperly used, it may not only hamper communication but even restrict thought itself.

CHAPTER IV

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE STUDY OF LANGUAGE FROM ANTHROPOLOGY*

Linguistics has grown out of two traditions: comparative philology and anthropology. Comparative philology had its beginning in 1786 when Sir William Jones in studying Hindustani and Sanskrit noticed their similarity to European languages. In 1819 Jakob Grimm of fairy tale fame published the Grammar of Germanic Languages. He showed that there were systematic shifts in sounds in moving from one Germanic language to another. Work of this sort described all languages in terms of categories recognized in Sanskrit, Greek, and Latin.

The other major root for linguistics was anthropology. As interest in cultures all over the world developed, anthropologists came in contact with languages outside the realm of the Indo-European languages, and they were compelled to develop new concepts for describing and understanding the nature of these other languages. After World War I the structuralists combined what had been learned about Indo-European and non-Indo-European languages according to basic concepts of sound and structure. Two early works in linguistics were *Language* by the anthropologist Edward Sapir (34) in 1921 and a work of the same title, in 1933, by Leonard Bloomfield (3), a language scholar, who was very much aware of the close tie between language and other aspects of culture.

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*Material for this chapter was prepared or suggested for the English Curriculum Study Center by Dr. Wilfrid C. Bailey, University of Georgia, 1965.

Linguistics, as a discipline, is concerned with methods and forms of linguistic description. Anthropology is concerned with language as a vital part of the total culture of a people. However, many scholars have followed in the tradition of Bloomfield and Sapir, making notable contributions in linguistics and in anthropology. In calling attention to the close tie between disciplines, Landar observes that language is "an infinitely nuanced instrument for the socialization and the preservation of cultural inventions" (25, p. 44). Linguists, in formalizing the study of language, have given impetus to more scientific methods of assessing other cultural phenomena. Boas (6, p. 9) expressed his awareness of the import of modern linguistic methods thus:

> In the progress of science hitherto, there has been a painful contrast between our great achievement in physical and biological science and our failure to gain scientific understanding of human affairs. To the latter half of this contrast there is one striking exception, our ability to record language scientifically and to derive scientific results from these records. We account for this by the consideration that language is the simplest and the basic feature among those which make up specifically human activity. Whatever our literary

> and artistic or our philosophical and religious grasp of human ways, the scientific understanding of man will in all likelihood grow from our understanding of language, and this understanding has already reached the scientific stage. From it we may reasonably hope to derive practical benefits comparable to those which have arisen from our scientific understanding and control of nonhuman things.

Linguistic anthropology poses problems and provides insights that are of value to the teacher of written composition. Those most pertinent are those which relate to language as a cultural institution, its arbitrary character, its manner of transmission and of change, and those which relate to the interdependence of language and thought. Though many of the questions cannot be answered conclusively yet because of inadequate data or lack of precision in methodology, the teacher of English can share with children interest in some of the intriguing notions advanced by linguistic anthropologists.

Anthropologists define language as a system of arbitrary vocal symbols by means of which a social group communicates. Each language is a discrete system of vocal sounds and should not be equated with its vocabulary or with its written form. The vocal symbols are arbitrary in the sense that, with a few possible exceptions, the sounds have no meaning in themselves. There is no reason why three sounds /k/ae/t/ should refer to a particular kind of animal. Gato (Spanish), kutching (Malay), Katze (German), chatte (French), mosi (Navaho) will do just as well.

A language is a system, or rather a complex of systems--a system of sounds, a system of words, a system of word groups. Phonetics is the study of the speech sounds used in a language. There are many possible human speech sounds--perhaps as many as five thousand. Each language uses a definite, very limited number. In English about forty-five are used. In Hawaiian and some other Polynesian languages, there are as few as twelve. The morphology of a language is the arrangement of sounds. Each language has its own system of arrangement. Some foreign words are difficult for us to pronounce because they bring together sounds that do not occur in juxtaposition in English. Syntax refers to the arrangement of sentence elements. Using about forty-five sounds, a person can produce thousands of words. He can combine these words in an almost endless number of sentences to express an infinite number of ideas, from the very elementary to the very complex and subtle. Written language involves still other systems of symbolization and the conventions which contribute to effective written communications.

Because language is a cultural phenomenon--no society exists without a language, we expect it to have certain characteristics. It is related to other aspects of a culture. It is learned, not inherited. And like other social institutions, it changes as the culture of which it is a part changes.

An intriguing question which anthropologists pose suggests the interdependence of language and culture: What is unique in the special human experiences of particular tribal societies (or of a people) by virtue of their languages? Goodenough suggests that anthropologists often talk about cultures, describing the material setting of a culture and its artifacts, without isolating the concepts which determine the behavior of individuals within the culture. He points out: "It is in the course of learning his language and how to use it that every human being acquires the bulk of his culture" (19, p. 39). Linquists have developed adequate methods of describing the arbitrary systems of symbolic sounds. But so far we know little of the process by which a person changes the sound symbols and the accompanying signals --the objective aspects of language--to the subjective concepts that give meaning to the objective aspects. Without such a process, decoding and its reverse, encoding, communication and culture would be impossible.

It is well to note that many anthropologists follow Sapir's lead in believing that language and culture are not causally linked. Sapir (25, pp. 216f) stated that language is the vehicle for expressing all experience and that it is possible to change every sound, word, and concrete concept of a language without changing the events or experiences which it expresses. He held that the drift of language and the drift of culture are unrelated processes. Many, among them Whorf, have voiced contrary views, which will be discussed later in connection with the relations between language and thought. Certainly the language of a culture is one of its great achievements. Sapir observed that "language is the most massive and inclusive art we know, a mountainous and anonymous work of unconscious generations" (33, p. 294).

Another aspect of the relation between language and culture is the cultural use of language. Here the emphasis is on when and how language is used. As with other aspects of language, the use or role varies from one culture to another. Among tribes in eastern Canada, a man returning after many days away from home on a hunting trip will walk into his home camp without saying a word to his wife. After some time has been spent on routine chores, information about his trip will be offered. This seems to be a reaction to being out of contact with home. There are anxieties about what might have happened. It is only after silently determining that nothing is wrong that conversation will begin. They do not, as in our culture, ask questions or expect the wife to greet them with a rapid listing of all the trials and tribulations that occurred in the husband's absence.

The social use of language becomes more complex in a bilingual situation because two sets of rules apply. The individual tends to respond in the linguistic forms that go with the cultural pattern appropriate to the situation. In a study involving the bilingual Japanese wives of Americans (14), it was found that the wives used Japanese in discussing Japanese situations and English in talking about American topics. They were interviewed by both Japanese and Americans. Word association tests conducted in Japanese by a Japanese brought very different responses from the same or corresponding words in English by an American. The differences were clearly related to differences between the cultures. The responses became mixed when a Japanese did the interviewing in English. Because the cultural differences were associated with race, the cultural and linguistic symbols became mixed and confused.

This study suggests one of the possible explanations for a student with an "A" in English using sub-standard language in other classes or in conversation. In countries with a high proportion of adult illiteracy, professional teams have found it rather easy to teach reading in adult classes. Frequently, however, return visits later were disappointing. Those who had learned to read and write found little motivation to maintain their skills when they continued to live in a non-literate culture. Perhaps many students find little use for standard English outside the classroom.

Language is culturally transmitted. In most cultures some significance is placed on the child's acquisition of language; however, cultures vary in beliefs about how language is learned. For instance, an Arapaho child whose fontanels were beginning to harden--"one that was just old enough to talk"--was fed cooked meat and boiled eggs of meadow lark. The belief was that the child so fed would talk early and have knowledge of things. Meadow larks, of course, talk Arapaho; therefore, Children fed on meadow lark eggs would surely talk wisely. Moving the lark's bill back and forth between the child's lips was also believed to be potent. When the child was older, he was taught words by being directed to concentrate and then to repeat the names of various things in his environment (20).

Much attention is given to the Navaho baby. When he cries, something is always done for him. The Navaho feels that the most deeply rooted aspects of personality take form in the first year of life through the unverbalized interactions between the baby and those around him. Navahos spend little time in verbal warnings, but let the child learn from experience and little injuries. The positive side of child training consists of constant encouragement in the acquisition of language and other skills. Someone is always talking to the baby, giving him words to imitate, telling him especially the proper kinship terms to use in addressing his various relatives, praising him whenever his random babblings happen to hit a meaningful sound combination (26).

When a Balinese baby is born, the midwife speaks for him. As she lifts him in her arms in the first moments of his life, she says, "I am just a poor little newborn baby, and I don't know how to talk properly but I am grateful to you, honorable people, who have entered this pig sty of a house to see me born." From this moment on, the baby is fitted into a frame of behavior, of imputed speech and imputed thought and complex gesture, far beyond his skill and maturity. Whereas the American mother tries to get the child to imitate simple courtesy phrases, the Balinese mother recites them, in the first person, and the child gradually slips into speech (1, p. 13).

During the first six years of his life, the normal child in our culture learns to use the language of his environment. His experiences during these years are not systematized for him nor presented to him in an ordered way. Moreover, because language behavior is learned, it is natural that children vary widely in the quantity and quality of their learning. Both internal and external factors are involved. Perhaps the most amazing fact is that, by the time they enter school, most children have much understanding of the many factors involved in oral communication: speaker, receiver, form of message, code, topic, setting. If one factor is varied, the child learns to vary the others appropriately. Both his ability to send and receive are dependent on his understanding of grammatical utterances and his sensitivity to appropriateness. Hymes (24, p. 387) implies these multi-learnings when he says: "The child learns what the ethnographer seeks to discover and state explicitly--the classes of speech events recognized in the community and the rules governing relations among them, their constitutive factors, and the functions subserved."

Instinctively, perhaps, as well as imitatively most children enjoy verbal play, an activity akin to the aesthetic use of language. Burke (9) suggests that the playful and aesthetic uses of language elaborate and round out verbal patterns. Perhaps such uses of language enable the individual--the child--to extend his control of language. At any rate, the ludic and aesthetic uses of language are universal. In these activities the manipulations of language reveal systematic patterns of deviation from the usual language patterns. Moreover, various cultures reveal diverse patterns of deviation from the norm--their own licensed ways of breaking the rules (24, pp. 291-294).

Like other aspects of culture, language changes. Many recent studies have been concerned with an attempt to analyze the interplay of social and linguistic factors involved in the process of language change. Hymes (24, p. 50) observes: "Many scholars have recognized that even when internal linguistic conditions explain the likelihood or the fact of the appearance of a sound change, only social conditions can explain the likelihood or fact of its spread, establishment, and maintenance within a community." He goes on to say that the point applies not only to changes in phonology but also to those in grammar and vocabulary. Linguistic change is sociolinguistic change.

Evidences of language changes are not difficult to find. Over a long period of time many languages, as different as French and Spanish or English and German, have developed from one language. Gradual changes in phonology, grammar, and vocabulary are evident in the differences in New York English and London English. Rapid changes in morphology and vocabulary are apparent in the language innovations necessitated by such new experiences as sending manned rockets into space. A study of linguistic changes emphasizes the value of understanding the cultural context of language.

The relation between language and the thinking process has been a question of persistent interest to man. In this connection a common error is to assume that the language of a culturally advanced people is superior to or more complex than that of a primitive people, that the latter is crude, simple in structure, incapable of expressing complex or subtle ideas. Languages are endlessly diverse, but there seem to be no distinguishing characteristics that mark a language as that of a primitive people. Hill (21, p. 86) asserts that "most modern linguists who have experience of preliterate languages reject the idea of the inefficiency, formlessness, and overparticularity of primitive speech," an idea grounded in the evolutionary anthropology of the nineteenth century. Boas (24, p. 89) observed that if our language made morphological distinctions between reports based on direct experience, hearsay, or inference--as some Indian languages do, we would be better informed newspaper readers than now. In writing of the temporal and spatial precision of an Indian language, Whorf (37, p. 140) said "English compared to Hopi is like a bludgeon compared to a rapier."

Another notion, already touched upon in referring to the relation between language and culture, is the theory that the cognitive process and language are determinatively related. This belief that a particular language predisposes a people to particular thought patterns has been a recurring one in western cultures, perhaps because grammatical categories are relatively more stable than other aspects of language or because certain metaphysical concepts--person, time, space, matter, act--are echoed in grammatical features. Boas' writings reflect his belief that a descriptive analysis of the form of American Indian dialects would reveal native forms of thought (5). Whorf, extending an idea expressed by Sapir, developed the theory that language not only expresses thought but actually shapes thought (37, p. 139). Sense or meaning, he said, "does not result from words or morphemes but from patterned relations between words or morphemes . . . /These factors of linkage/ correspond to neural processes and linkages of a non-motor type, silent, invisible, and individually unobservable. . . . /These linkages/ can only be determined by a penetrating study of the LANGUAGE spoken by the individual whose thinking process we are concerned with, and it will be found to be FUNDAMENTALLY DIFFERENT for individuals whose languages are of fundamentally different types" (37, p. 130).

The possibilities of a relationship between ways of thinking and language is illustrated by comparing Navaho and English verb categories. In Navaho the verb categories vary in a consistent and predictable manner, but this variation is based on a view of phenomena very different from that of a speaker of English. All flat, flexible objects, such as paper and rugs, are in one category; whereas, long, rigid objects, like sticks and pencils, are in another. There are eleven of these groups. Navaho children must learn these distinctions in order to talk about objects.

In an experiment two groups of Navaho children were compared. One group spoke primarily Navaho and the other

English. The children were asked to match blocks that varied in form and in color. The Navaho-speaking children matched the blocks by form; the English-speaking children, by color. This result led to the conclusion that language did determine the way of thinking. However, in another experiment the Indian children were compared with a group of New England children who had been exposed to form board puzzles and various commercial toys requiring choices of form. These children matched by form as did the Navaho-speaking children (15, pp. 84f). Evidently, then language was not the only factor.

Landar (25) calls the idea that language molds thought one of the great self-deceptions of our age. He points out that not even in the case of the Navaho verbs have the results been convincing. However, he states that some of the studies have been too suggestive for one to be anxious to see psycholinguistic experimentation abandoned (25, p. 220).

Perhaps it is more optimistic to believe with Sapir that human thought is not hobbled by language (25, p. 216). Nevertheless, though language may not restrict potential cognitive processes, may it not habitualize certain ways of thinking? In his Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus Wittgenstein, according to Landar (25, p. 63), describes language as a magic machine so wired that it could tap perceptions and cognitions stored in neural tissue. Each individual's world then is constructed, a fabrication of perceptions and cognitions attuned to verbal symbols. Experience gives to each person only a part of the infinite universe. And, as Landar says, "the part that is given cannot be examined or manipulated without language, so that the world exists only by virtue of nervous insights which are ordered experiences of signs. . . . Thought and the world are inseparbly united by language. Language allows me to organize my world, in the sense in which words come to be peculiarly associated with things and events in my given cultural environment. Where language is limited, my world is too; the events or facts which I know, in a captivating tissue of grammatical signs and operations, in a tissue which Wittgenstein called his 'logical hold,' are the world."

CHAPTER V

CONTRIBUTIONS FROM SOCIOLOGY TO THE STUDY OF LANGUAGE*

The relationship between language and the individual in society is somewhat analogous to the relationship between language and a people. Just as language is both a part of a culture and its chief means of preservation and dissemination, so is it both an important attribute of the individual and the instrument which enables individuals to form and maintain a society--to share, to recall, to perpetuate, to change, to predict all manifestations of that society, including language itself.

Modern sociologists center their interests on three overlapping areas: the person, society, and culture. The three cannot be separated except for analytical treatment. Each functions as a sub-system and the three interact to form a whole, a true system. Society may be defined as an organized group of people, not a mere collection of people, or as a group of people who have lived together long enough to have developed a culture. Culture may be defined as a group's way of life--a group's set of ways of behaving, believing, feeling. Each of these ways have certain characteristics, such as being learned, shared, changeable, variable, and transmitted socially--not genetically or biologically.

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To define person is difficult without first understanding the framework within which he exists. In fact, a person cannot define himself except in terms of his society and culture. A person is, indeed, a product of socialization; socialization is the process by which he learns his roles in society, the process by which he learns what he can expect of others and what others expect of him in various situations. This process is dependent on language--a standardized system of symbols. The development of a concept of self, without which a person cannot behave at all, is a product of society and of social interaction, mediated through language.

An infant has no concept of self. As he matures, he develops self-concept by projecting his own awareness outward. When does the concept come in an individual child's development cycle? We really do not know, but it seems to be closely related to his language development. Cooley (11) said that the person cannot become aware of himself until his behavior, which is directed outward at others and at things, gets "tangled up" with what other people are doing. People around him are constantly acting toward him and toward objects. He gets tangled up in their behavior. When his actions go with theirs toward objects and other portions of their behavior and his own come back to him, he discovers himself. As a person becomes an individual in his own eyes, he must work out an elaborate system by which he relates self to others and generalizes these relationships. He cannot do this in the absence of language. Thus, progress in developing the self concept is limited by the development of language. The key factor in cultural deprivation is perhaps language deprivation.

The very nature of sociolinguistic studies allows the teacher to think about language in fruitful and significant ways. For instance, studies that focus on the structure of standard language may lead to the assumption that non-standard dialects are erratic deviations or irregularities of the standard; whereas, studies of the speech habits of a population reveal that each dialect has its own patterning. Moreover, the structure of a language or dialect is itself a part of a larger structure: the patterning or structure of speech activity in general. Studies of the patterning of speech activities are concerned with defining the kinds of speech events, the factors which shape each kind of speech event, the functions or uses of speech, and the relationship between verbal and non-verbal symbols of communication (24, p. 386). The fact that a community's speech activity is a conventionalized system is apparent in the interdependency of the various factors: sender, receiver, channel, message form, code, topic, context or scene. Hymes (24, p. 387) emphasizes this interdependence when he observes, "it is not the case that anyone can say anything, by any means, to anyone else, on any occasion, and to any purpose."

Recognition of speech differences and evaluation based on speech differences seems to be universal. We are accustomed to identifying three levels of usage: substandard or illiterate, standard, and formal or literary. Often we assume that only in a complex, highly literate, and stratified society are usage levels socially significant. Bloomfield (4, pp. 391-396) found, however, that similar levels were recognized by the Menomini Indians of Wisconsin, a small nonliterate tribe whose language is without dialectic differences. He describes the three levels thus: "the first is illiterate, childish, stupid; the second is normal; the third elevated, poetic, archaizing." In concluding the discussion, Bloomfield emphasizes the social nature of language in his observation (4, p. 296) that:

> The nearest approach to an explanation of "good" and "bad" language seems to be this, then, that, by accumulation of obvious superiorities, both of character and standing, as well as of language, some persons are felt to be better models of conduct and speech than others. Therefore, even in matters where the preference is not obvious, the forms which these same persons use are felt to have the better flavor. This may be

> a generally human state of affairs, true in every group and applicable to all languages, and the factor of Standard and Literary Language versus dialect may be a superadded secondary one.

In this statement Bloomfield indicates that the relative status of items of usage is not linguistically but sociolinguistically determined. Newman (30), concurring in this opinion, points out that some high-toned English words are complex morphologically, others are not; some slang expressions are often shortened, monosyllabic terms, others are elaborate in form and metaphorically involved. In learning to speak, then, a child not only learns the structure and denotative vocabulary of his speech environment, but he also acquires attitudes about the use of language and about the value of particular ways of speaking. He learns the connotation that words and structural elements evoke because of the status of those who use them and the situations with which they are associated.

In many cultures, as in ours, the language of the high-status group is more conservative than that of the low-status. As social stratification becomes more distinct, dialectal differences and differences in the functions of language increase. Gerth and Mills (17) point out that in some societies movement from one social class to another is practically impossible because of the development of an exclusive, conventional language. The complex influence of social status on language development was explored in the studies of Bernstein (2), who notes that

". . . forms of spoken language in the process of their learning, elicit, reinforce, and generalize distinct types of relationships with the environment and thus create particular dimensions of significance. Speech marks out what is relevant--affectively, cognitively, and socially" (2, p. 288).

Bernstein uses the term "formal" to indicate the language used by the middle class. The speech mode of this class is relatively difficult to predict, varying considerably from one individual to another, and the sentence organization is manipulated to clarify meaning and make it explicit. By contrast, the speech mode of the low-status class reveals rigidity of syntax and restricted use of structural possibilities. Furthermore, speech is condensed, word meanings restricted, and the possibilities of elaboration reduced. This use of language, Bernstein calls a "public" language. A child of the working class, then, has "to translate and mediate the middle-class language structure through the logically simpler language structure of his own class to make it meaningful" (2, p. 295). The middle-class child, on the other hand, in effect uses two languages, a public and a formal, and he learns to move easily from one to the other as occasion demands. For the working-class child the difficulty is greater, for he attaches significance to a different aspect of language from that required by the learning situation.

Bernstein (2, p. 305) observes:

> The working-class boy is often genuinely puzzled by the need to acquire vocabulary or to use words in a way that is, for him, peculiar. It is important to realize that his difficulty in ordering a sentence and connecting sentences--problems of qualifying an object, quality, or idea, sensitivity to time and its extensions and modifications, making sustained relationships--are all alien to the way he perceives and reacts to his immediate environment. The total system of his perception, which results in a sensitivity to content rather than to the structure of objects, applies equally to the structure of a sentence.

Apart from social class differences, language serves as the basis for dividing our society into other groups. Sherif and Sherif (35) say that almost every occupation has its own special way of communicating. Doctors, air-conditioning mechanics, astronauts, teachers, janitors, little-leaguers--all develop language patterns peculiarly meaningful in the context in which they are used. These speciality languages "integrate the behaviors which go on within the order more readily and precisely than could symbols from general discourse" (17, p. 278).

In many societies, the peer group, with its own language habits, has become a powerful influence on youth during the transitional, adolescent years. By their very nature, peer groups inhibit language development. As the German sociologist George Simmel perceptively observed sixty years ago, peer groups develop and retain their attraction primarily among youth who lack inner resources and genuine intellectual interests. In our era, considerable research on cliques and gangs among low and middle class youngsters (22, 38, 10) has developed a fairly consistent picture of adolescent culture. Its ingredients, according to Boskoff (7), are "emphasis on physical skills and activities, which are learned by imitation; the selection of activities that involve little or no responsibility; disinterest in, if not hostility toward, mental improvements or intellectual pursuits; the use of a semi-cultic vocabulary, created for face-to-face communication; an active repudiation of individuality and deviation; and a persistent concern for status, acceptance, and popularity" within the group. To the extent, then, that a youngster is enmeshed in this network of values, he is immune to the socializing influences of the larger cultural community.

Regional dialectal differences have given rise to distinct cults. In this country, interest in such differences finds perhaps its most scientific manifestation in recent efforts to develop a full linguistic atlas of the United States. Distinctive dialects may be developed by minority groups. A pertinent point in this connection, relevant to the teaching of language, is that the attitudes engendered by the inter-ethnic relationships of the two groups--more than any linguistic consideration--seem to determine the drift of dialectal change. In his study of intelligibility and inter-ethnic attitudes, Wolff (39) concluded that in a given area, in this case Nigeria, "interlingual communication takes place when cultural factors are favorable to such communication, even though the two languages are quite different and that the absence of interlingual communication between two linguistically close dialects is indicative of negative cultural factors" (39, p. 440). Such a study throws some light on the social and ethnic adjustments involved in accepting and wanting to acquire a dialect different from that initially learned, the dialect a person accepts as his own.

One's language is his certificate of citizenship, his badge of membership in a particular group, and his means of defining his identity. Within the large speech community, the boundaries of a given group are probably best defined in terms of language. At that point where consensual meaning, shared usage, and the organized symbolic system fades into another organized system, there the group boundary exists. Language is essentially a group product and is, according to Lindesmith and Strauss (27), the carrier and embodiment of the features of the environment which group members feel to be important. Newcomb (29) says that to members of the group its norms are much more than useful devices for communication. Group members feel strongly about the objects which they perceive in terms of the symbols, about the symbols themselves, and about the group members with whom the norms are shared. Not that a member automatically takes on the attitudes of his membership group; each reacts to group norms in his own way. But the individual usually feels that the group's customs, institutions, ideologies, its positions and roles belong to the members and that when these are attacked he is being attacked. This principle gives rise to such feelings as defense of one's group, intergroup rivalry and conflict, rejection of members and ideas from other groups.

Language is a key factor in social process, social actions, and social interaction, because all human action, whether directed toward influencing the action of others or toward controlling the environment, is mediated through a symbol-concept system. Certainly the actions of others are predicted, received, and interpreted in terms of that symbol-concept system. Thus, all forms of social interaction--cooperation, competition, or conflict--involve communication at every stage, in that meanings are being sent, received, and interpreted, as well as being translated into bases for future action. Shibutani (36) points out that social interaction always involves "role taking." That is, a person, in order to formulate appropriate action toward or in relation to another, must be able, symbolically, to put himself in the place of the other and to anticipate what the other is likely to do. If members of a society can do this, concerted and harmonious action can take place--the kind of action that is an essential condition of society. Sherif and Sherif (35) state that human beings originate concepts in interaction with one another and that, typically, interaction between humans takes place on a conceptual level. The learning of language, then, must precede successful and effective social action and interaction.

Within any large, complex language community, interaction among social groups necessitates that individuals become aware of and proficient in the use of the many dialects of the larger language community. In any society access to the culture is dependent upon profiency in the standard or literary dialect of the language. Not only are the personal, intrinsic attributes of a culture--values, beliefs, and feelings--transmitted by language, but also the public institutions--marriage and family, education, political and economic institutions. Because they are essentially abstract and intangible, awareness of their nature and value as well as performance within each requires understanding of a commonly accepted symbol-concept system. Through the centuries man has found that the major needs of the group need not be left to chance. These great cultural structures, institutions, have developed and are maintained to see that the needs are met according to the standards which people have evolved through ages of experience. Each institution, including language, is a complex set of standardized ways of behaving, believing, and feeling. Individually men come and go as the generations succeed each other, but social institutions live through the ages, undergoing modification as a society innovates and deviates, but retaining essential continuity and, thereby, giving stability and dependability to human life.

Language then is the instrument which enables man to perpetuate his culture and to derive meaning from the intrinsic aspects of his society. But the great cultural institutions give meaning and order to the life of the individual only if his conceptual and linguistic development permit him to act and interact acceptably. Language may enlarge and enrich or distort and blur man's universe within. It may enable him to share ideas that benefit all mankind or cause him to feel alone and rejected. Although language is a social invention, it is--perhaps more than any other cultural phenomena--personal and individual. For a people it reflects the complex of their values, beliefs, norms, institutions. For the individual, it is the means of discovering and maintaining his uniqueness and his commonness, his role in his society.

CHAPTER VI

INFLUENCE OF ENVIRONMENT ON LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT*

Language is man's basic and most effective means of communication--his lifeline to the past, his passport to the future. In effect, it is the thread with which the elements of a culture and the people of a society are integrated and organized. It provides an elaborate collection of symbols adequately structured and sufficiently differentiated to permit conveying an infinite quantity of knowledge precisely, colorfully, and expeditiously.

Two elements are essential in effective communication: mutually understandable symbols and contextual significance. In order to communicate with someone, there must be mutual agreement on the meaning of the symbols used. If a lady were to wink at a gentleman in this classroom, he would not understand the message she was attempting to send unless somewhere along the line he had attached a meaning to the symbol winking. In addition, the symbol used must be interpreted in context. If a lady were to wink in a classroom, it might mean simply that she had something in her eye. On the other hand, that same wink in a cozy little French restaurant with candle light and soft music would probably mean something quite different! The point may be illustrated in a different situation. If someone in this room were to shout "Fire," everyone would probably run in all directions. However, if the same term were used by someone on a combat patrol in Viet Nam, the symbol would have an entirely different meaning. The symbol in both cases is the same; the context is different.

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*Revision of a speech given by John M. Smith, Jr., at the English Curriculum Study Center, University of Georgia, May 15, 1965.

Children must be taught the language system of their society. The ability to communicate in symbols is not inherent in the human being; it must be developed through interpersonal interactions. Among the most significant interpersonal interactions are those that are experienced during the preschool years of life. The environment in which children live determines the quality and quantity of those experiences. It encompasses all of the psycho-social-physical elements that collectively determine the nature, style, and flexibility of their linguistic abilities.

It is especially important that kindergarten and primary school teachers recognize some of the implications of background factors relative to a child's ability to communicate linguistically in the setting of a formal language environment--the school. Five background factors have great significance in the development of linguistic ability: intelligence, socio-economic status, the family, formal preschool training, and race.

Intelligence may be defined as the ability to solve problems and to conceptualize experiences as measured by psychometric instruments or standardized tests. In effect, educators measure overt manifestations and deduce covert intelligence. It is evident that intelligence is a genetically based configuration of behavior. That is, the structure of the brain itself--the intra- and inter-cellular composition--sets a basic pattern of intelligence. However, the extent to which the potential of this basic pattern is developed depends on interpersonal interactions.

Eunice Newton (31) found that the greatest single external influence on a normal child's intelligence during his developmental years is the verbal environment in which he lives. If a child has not had experiences that can be related to the testing situation or instrument, it is quite likely that he will register low on an intelligence test, including the nonverbal form.

The relationship between intelligence and verbal ability is reciprocal. Intelligence is basic to the development of linguistic skill that is needed in the formal educational context. Conversely, linguistic skill is needed particularly in the formal educational context to express intelligence and to apply intelligence to overt situations.

Socio-economic status refers to the total way of life associated with different socio-economic levels within our social system. It represents, in fact, access to goods and services and various configurations of values, attitudes, and experiences. Relative to the formal educational context, it represents a variety of experiences ranging from verbally barren to verbally fertile involvement. Such differences are usually reflected in a child's ability to adjust satisfactorily to the demands of formal linguistic interaction in the school context.

The significance of socio-economic differences can be illustrated in the areas of health, occupation, and language patterns. There is substantial evidence to support the contention that people of low socio-economic level tend to have high mortality and morbidity rates (13). Their limited access to goods and services; their extremely limited spatial, sanitational, and nutritional assets; and their restricted knowledge of, and appreciation for, desirable health practices--all these factors collectively determine the vigor and stamina with which a child can explore and learn from new experiences.

The relationship between the occupational status of parents and the I.Q.'s of their children tended to be inverse according to Florence Goodenough's study (18). The factor of occupational selectivity contributes to this pattern. That is, those persons less capable of competing in our competitive society tend to filter downward into the low status occupations. Limited capacity to compete may be based on physical, emotional, or intellectual limitations that collectively result in an over-representation of these people in the low-status occupations. Of course, there is little doubt that many of the children of these parents have low intellectual capacities as a result of mate selection from within eligible groups of people of comparable socio-economic levels. On the other hand, many of these children have above average intellectual capacities but have little opportunity to develop their capacities into measurable behavioral patterns.

Differences in language patterns of different socio-economic levels become more evident as the distance between socio-economic levels increases. Verbalization in some families is at a minimum. The children in those families encounter great difficulty developing verbal skills; whereas, children in families that are verbally inclined tend to develop verbal skills with little difficulty. Esther Milner's study (28) of first grade children in the Atlanta school system supports this view of the differences in language preparation on a socio-economic basis.

Dialect differences on the basis of socio-economic references are evident in research in the general area of language differences. The term dialect differences is used to refer to different systems of linguistic communication, that is, different connotative and denotative aspects of terms, variations in pronunciation and enunciation, and structural differences. For example, does a teacher use the same language system in her home that she uses in the classroom? Probably not. In effect, she uses different dialects in the two settings. The extent to which they differ depends on the linguistic habits of her home associates and on whether or not her classroom dialect reflects her background language patterns.

The socio-economic factor is therefore influential in the development of language patterns in children. Children within their own socio-economic settings, including those of extreme poverty, develop effective communication systems. However, in the formal verbal environment of the school, children of low socio-economic background are faced with the difficulty of developing a formal dialectal pattern of language if they are to adjust to the requirements of the school.

The family itself is a dynamic background factor that impresses itself on the behavioral patterns of children. For example, family values and attitudes tend to be reflected in the values and attitudes of the children. Too, children tend to imitate the language patterns of the significant other members of the family. In effect, these people are language models for the children. When a teacher listens to children talking, can she detect parental influence? Of course she can detect some parental language peculiarities if they are mirrored in the language patterns of their children, especially the language peculiarities of the mother. If the language models are ignorant and deviate considerably from the formal language patterns of the society in which they live, children will experience a different involvement and will develop a personalized system of communication.

Child language models in the family also influence the language patterns of their sibblings. In a multi-sibling family, two or three children may communicate effectively by using their own system of communication. In this situation, a child language model, which is an incomplete model by society's standards, is impressing his patterns of language on another sibling, who then learns the system of communication of the model. This cycle of language development among siblings produces language retardation. Studies by Breckenridge and Vincent (8) indicate that children of about the same age in a family tend to develop their own system of language. Ruth Howard (23) found that triplets are retarded in language development in relation to single children. Ella Day (12) showed in her study of twins that retardation at age five was equivalent to approximately two years.

Table talk has been used by several behavioral scientists as an index to the integration of the children into the family in action. What goes on at the dinner table? What does the family talk about while at the table? Studies of these questions have revealed several interesting patterns of behavior. Esther Milner (28) reported a striking difference in behavioral patterns of low class families and those of middle class families. In low class families there was very little two-way communication. Most of the speech was directed at the children with little communication by the children directed at the adults. In fact, the adults verbalized little throughout the test period. Evidently communication was primarily conducted through some medium of communication other than language. In the middle class family the children appeared to be integrated into the family as reflected in the communication patterns.

The question of material goods must be considered in the family context. If a child does not have things with which to play, or does not have opportunities to play, or does not have private property, how can he develop frames of reference that will be needed later in conceptualizing his experiences? How can he begin to manipulate things symbolically if he has not had the opportunity to interact with physical objects, to explore their meanings, and to relate them to his conceptual framework? Children so deprived of experiences can be assisted, however, particularly at the kindergarten level of education. They can receive some assistance in the first grade. The problem becomes more serious, of course, in the second and third grades. There, great skill is required of the teachers if they are to resolve the resulting problems satisfactorily. The question, at those levels, is how many are capable or willing to do what is needed to overcome the problem?

Formal preschool training has been shown to be effective in helping children to make transition from the home environment to the formal verbal environment of the school. It not only helps them in that respect, but also increases their ability to absorb reading and arithmetic more expeditiously (16). Research studies suggest that formal training tends to raise the I.Q.'s of subjects (32). Apparently, the experiences encountered in the kindergarten, especially those that encourage verbal expression, orient children in a relatively painless fashion to the formal language system of the school. The kindergarten environment, which is potentially supplied with almost unlimited opportunities for experiences, is one way to bridge the language gap--the experience gap--between the home and the first grade. Kindergarten seems to offer children a little head start in their headlong plunge into the sometimes murky waters of the formal process of socialization we label "education."

The effects of racial differences on children's developments are highly controversial. Nevertheless, there are certain facts that need to be considered by those who teach interracially mixed classes of children. First, we all know that there is only one species of man, *homo sapiens*. Second, there is no substantial body of scientifically acceptable evidence which supports the hypothesis that the races--Caucasoid, Mongoloid, Negroid, and the numerous subraces--differ in innate intellectual capacities. However, there appears to be a consensus on the point that they do differ in the experiences they encounter as a result of their respective positions in the majority-minority spectrum of our society. A member of a social minority represents the "out" group; he does not have the social power structure for support. Under such a condition his socialization will differ considerably from that of a member of the "in" group. This diversity of experience may be amplified, moreover, because members of a minority group are often members of low socio-economic classes. The combination of these two factors will tend to estrange him from the idealized middle class standards of behavior demanded by society. In such a situation, it may appear to ill-informed teachers that differences in behavioral patterns are the manifestations of "inherited inferiority." Third, there are differences in behavioral patterns which will be rather obvious in a classroom situation. In our area of the country, we may anticipate problems with formal linguistic interaction which will require remedial effort. On the other hand, we may also expect the same type of problem from Caucasoid children of low socio-economic levels. Personal hygiene will probably be a problem with which teachers will have to deal; however, this problem, too, is encountered with some Caucasoid children. Lack of parental support of classroom efforts will certainly constitute a problem; however, lack of parental support does not appear to be the exclusive franchise of any one race of people. Thus, what appears to be inherited differences in abilities to learn or to internalize middleclass standards of behavior are probably no more than manifestations of having received different treatment and of having been subjected to different expectations.

From this consideration of the influence of certain environmental factors on language development, these conclusions seem valid:

> 1. Presuming normal anatomical and physiological, emotional, and intellectual capabilities, language facility typical of the general culture of a child is determined by environmental factors.
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> 2. The language patterns of children are determined largely by the language patterns of significant other people in their environment--parents, siblings, and intimate peers.
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> 3. The language patterns of children are established principally during the preschool years. Studies have shown that as those people who are linguistically retarded enter school, they do not gain ground on those who are more capable; they

tend to lose ground--the linguistic gap expands rather than contracts.

4. Cultural deprivation generally tends to retard language development as measured on the scale of the middle-class formal language requirements. Although some children living under deprived conditions develop language skill in spite of their environments, these appear to be exceptions not typical products of that type of environment.

5. Caucasoid-Negroid differences in language patterns cannot be explained satisfactorily on the basis of alleged inherited racial differences. On the contrary, they appear to reflect more clearly socio-economic or minority status influences or the influences of cultural deprivation.

The importance of language skill in a contemporary, technologically complex society is common knowledge to every educator. However, the teacher alone cannot insure the language competency of his charges; he has to receive the assistance of parents and of society in general if success is to be achieved. More precisely, it is the responsibility of educators to plan a curriculum that will extend and broaden the conceptual and linguistic skills of children at every level of achievement and to promote activities by parents, specifically, and by society in general that will prepare and continuously encourage every child to exploit fully his linguistic potentialities. Such full individual development best serves the democratic society in which we live.

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PART III

CONTRIBUTIONS OF PSYCHOLOGY TO AN UNDERSTANDING OF LANGUAGE AND ITS USE

Introduction

The contributions of psychology to an understanding of language and its uses are multiple. However, from the teacher's vantage point, two aspects of the total complex are particularly intriguing: one reveals the interrelationship of language and thought in concept formation; the other, the process of language development in children.

Chapter VII, "The Concept System," points up the importance of the individual's concept system as a conditioning factor which determines--in part at least--his reaction to each new experience. The structured residue of all past experiences comprises an individual's concept system--his universe. Each new experience changes that universe, for it is augmented or modified by the increments of each new experience. Thus what an individual learns, takes unto himself, from an experience is determined both by the concept system through which the new experience is mediated and also by the nature of the new experience.

A teacher at a given time in the life of a child, even though she works with him a full nine months, has little control over the residual learnings which each child brings to the learning activities she carefully engineers for him. However, carefully guided sequential learning activities seem to determine, to some extent at least, the quality and quantity of the learnings--the residual increments to the individual's concept system. By directing sensory attention and by questions and discussion which encourage verbalization, stimulate imagination, and foster reflection, a teacher can influence the quantity and quality of a child's learnings.

The next chapter, "Language Development," gives some idea of children's language development. Research studies, such as those cited in this chapter, provide guidelines for realistic curriculum planning. However, in no other area of development is there wider variation in the patterning of children's growth than in language. Differences in language development are so closely related to differences in cognitive processes and in sensory stimuli receptivity that it is difficult to think of them as concomitantly, rather than causally, related. Often a person refines and extends his insight or gains new insights in the very process of seeking to express his thoughts. Those studies that link inner speech, on one hand, with the egocentric language of children and, on the other, with the thought processes of more mature language users are particularly interesting to teachers. Finally, this chapter briefly touches upon elementary children's growth in written composition skills.

In the final chapter of this section, Dr. McCarthy emphasizes the complex interrelationships among the physical, psychological, and environmental factors which determine the extent to which an individual will develop his capabilities. The importance of the child's environment in the early, so-called prelinguistic years is discussed. In speaking of the various environmental deprivations, Dr. McCarthy points out that the child who suffers certain deprivations during the critical early years may never "catch up" in language development. She discusses too the school environment conducive to maximum language growth, stressing the need to adapt assignments and evaluative procedures to each child's peculiar pattern of needs, skills, and potentiality.

CHAPTER VII

THE CONCEPT SYSTEM*

The systematic nature of language enables man to represent his systematic organization of concepts. The linguistic symbol includes as components both the sound-image (signifier) and the concept (signified). Language is useful to an individual exactly to the extent that its complexity and organization can represent his concept system. His concept system, in turn, is an internal representation of his interrelated experiences with his real world. There are thus several levels of representation. The "real" is represented by the concept system, the concept system is represented by the sound system or spoken language, the sound system is represented by the written language.

An individual sees and knows his world through a vast number and variety of experiences with the elements of the world and reality--through sense impressions and his own reaction to them. How is it possible for him to save, even partially, this mass of experience and to bring it to bear on his current efforts to make sense of his world? While the answer to this question is far from clear, it is so important to the study of language that the teacher must achieve the best understanding possible.

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*Dr. Emeliza Swain and Dr. Emily B. Gregory, paper presented at English Curriculum Study Center, University of Georgia, 1964.

The individual's sensing, perceiving, and knowing are processes whereby he organizes his experiences in systematic and economical form for future use (23, pp. 82-84). The total residual of experience--ideas, images, memories, generalizations, behavioral reactions, and their interrelationships--is termed, for the purpose of this discussion, the concept system. The concept system functions as the means whereby an individual summarizes and uses his past experiences to regulate, select, control, and direct his current thinking and acting (42, p. 131).

The concept system is dynamic; it maintains the stability required to make possible the control of the experiential world and yet is flexible enough to change as new aspects of the world are encountered (42, p. 131). There are included in the system at any one time concepts on different levels of generality and complexity; for example, the idea of a single class of objects, such as the notion of "chair," and complex abstractions from behavior, such as the notion of "work."

The concept is shaped in part by processes recognized and controlled by the conscious attention of the individual; but also, in important ways, by processes not under the control of conscious attention. The learning of relationships by the occurrence of two events at the same time becomes an important base for later learning. Children learn that fire is hot by a few experiences of pain. It is possible that many emotional reactions are established by repeated experiences in early childhood--experiences neither chosen nor consciously attended to by the child. Teachers see many occurrences in which relationships between items are learned by sheer repetition; many of these relationships may be learned with few repetitions if attention is consciously directed to the learning task. In similar fashion, concepts may be gained with or without conscious attention and intention (42, p. 107). It is also true that concepts may be applied to problems by individuals who are not aware that the concept exists and who cannot describe the nature of the concept they are using (42, p. 129).

It is difficult to do more than hypothesize about the nature of the concept system. Its very complexity of organization has discouraged methodical study, yet at the same time enticing psychologists to speculate about its nature and to seek models which offer useful analogies. There has, however, been considerable study of the smaller and more manageable unit of the system--the concept.

A concept is formed by the individual's sensing a likeness in different items, abstracting this common quality as a basis for inventing a category, and grouping items possessing this quality as belonging together in this category. Thus from several specific but different items named as "tables," the child sees some common characteristics and can then find and group still other items in the group called "tables" (38, 148).

Once a category is abstracted and available to the individual, it serves as a pattern by which to examine new items of experience and to classify them as examples of a particular category rather than of some other one. A concept, then, allows the individual to simplify his reaction to experience by seeing and reacting to any one of a group of items as though they were the same and to react to a new item as he has successfully reacted at previous times to items which he placed in the same category. Thus he can readily react to a new experience as it fits into some category previously formed (42, pp. 98-104).

Language allows the individual to name and, therefore, to hold in mind ready for further use the categories he has formulated (42, p. 106). An interesting possibility arises when the name of the category is "learned" before experience has provided opportunity for the formation of the concept named. It is as though the learner acquires a box with no contents--an "empty category" with no examples inside (8, p. 14). When a new word is introduced in this way, the definition must be followed by experiences which allow generalization. It is possible for the learner to acquire new concepts in this way only to a limited extent. A few "empty boxes" can gradually be filled, but the proportion of concepts so learned must be very small for the young child. As the handling of ideas and language becomes more proficient and consciously directed, a larger proportion of such learning can occur.

Concepts and the concept system change when an individual cannot place a new item of experience in a previously formed category. He modifies the concept system in some way to include the new item. This change in some part of the system requires changes in other parts or in relationships. The concept system appears to change throughout life, although it may be that slower changes in adult life are of a different nature from those in the formative years of childhood (42, p. 120).

Basic to a consideration of concept development is the fact that at each stage of development the child has characteristic thought processes. Piaget (33) has distinguished three major stages--though the stages of development are more continuous than discrete. The first stage, from infancy to the fifth or sixth year, is called *preoperational*. The child's principal achievement during this period is the ability to represent the external world by symbols. His concerns are with manipulating things and attaching symbols (names). The second stage is that of *concrete operations.* The child is able to manipulate symbols internally. He can "think through" a problem; no longer is he dependent on tangible manipulation or trial and error action to solve a problem. He is able to structure the things he encounters, but, as Bruner (7) points out, "he is not readily able to deal with possibilities not actually before him or not already experienced. This is not to say that children operating concretely are not able to anticipate things that are not present. Rather, they do not command the operations for conjuring up systematically the full range of alternative possibilities that could exist at any given time. They cannot go systematically beyond the information given them to a description of what else might occur." The third, formal operational, stage is marked by the ability to reason by hypothesis, to manipulate abstractions. In the first stage the thought processes seem to be dominantly syncretic; in the third, analytic, or a combination of the two.

Piaget's theory of assimilation and accommodation clarifies the nature of the child-environment interaction. His theory, according to Hunt (20, p. 258), is both genetic and environmentalistic. "In any given situation, the first response of the child is one of those behavioral structures (schemata) already present from past assimilation. What variations in the environment do is to force the child to cope with this variation, and, in the coping, to modify the structures (schemata). This latter is accommodation, and the modifications are then assimilated. . . ." The individual's development is dependent upon appropriate stimulation (meaningful stimuli) and opportunity to exercise schemata. The greater the variety of situations to which the child must accommodate his schemata the more differentiated and mobile they become. "The more variations in reality with which he has to cope, the greater his capacity for coping" (20, p. 258). This is equivalent to saying that the more the individual manipulates varied concepts the more differentiated they become and the more productive become the concept-forming processes. Thus, the behavioral and thought structures comprising intelligence are continually changing as a consequence of the accommodation and assimilation involved in an individual's encounters with his environment.

As children mature their behavior comes increasingly under the control of the stimulation which they themselves engender, their own verbalization being a part of the mediating process. Every new encounter is screened through the individual's mediating processes--a cumulative, compounded "hierarchy of operations" (20) through which he reacts to his environment. This is somewhat comparable to saying that the furniture that is in a room determines, to some extent at least, the kinds of furniture that can be added or that the kind that is added depends upon what is already there and what may be changed or exchanged (Piaget's accommodation and assimilation).

Some knowledge of the concept system aids understanding the child's behavior at various stages of cognitive and language development. The child's system of concepts is the framework of his learning and determines the behaviors possible to him. He speaks and writes of experiences in terms of this internal system of representation. His usable vocabulary is limited to words for which he has built a meaning into his concept system. The language structure he uses depends upon the relationships represented within his concept system.

Especially is the concept system involved in the process of composing. Some stimulus relates itself to some elements of the person's past experience as represented in his concept system. The new experience, enhanced by relationships to past experience, becomes a reason for writing. As he plans the content of his composition, he is reorganizing relevant portions of past experience by manipulating its inner representation--the elements of the concept system. The new organization and its relationships become the pattern for his written product, and he searches for language forms and structures which will adequately represent this new organization.

CHAPTER VIII

LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

The normal infant has the capacity for learning the language of his culture. Two conditions determine the extent of his achievement: development of the central nervous system and emotional and social stimulation (34, p. 469). The importance of language to cognitive, indeed to total, development is inestimable. As Church (10) points out, the use of language is not just another function, such as eating, sleeping, walking, making love, etc. Language changes man's organization of all sensory stimuli and the nature of all responses. It makes of man a verbal organism, for all experience comes to be mediated through language.

In the first months of infancy, sounds are produced as babbling, but during the first year there is increasing control of volume, pitch, and articulatory position. From eight to ten months a baby babbles during most of his waking hours; by the end of twelve months he is producing almost all conceivable sounds. Moreover, he gives evidence of understanding some of the things said to him. It is assumed that the child learns the sound system of his environment by recognizing contrasts between phonological elements, rather than by learning to imitate adult sounds one-by-one.

Skinner (36), in fact, believes that the child does not imitate adults, but that he produces a given sound by chance, later repeats and learns the sound because of the reaction evoked. No matter why they are first produced, certainly the child's meaningful sounds are stabilized by the reaction of the adults in his environment (1).

Montessori (39) noted that at four months, many infants watch the mouth of a speaker, at the same time making vague, erratic sounds. At six months they begin making syllable-like sounds. The first word comes at about ten months. By the end of the first year, the child normally uses three or four monosyllable or reduplicated syllable words (mama, dada). During the second year, according to Shirley (41, p. 286), the child's vocabulary jumps from three words to 270 or more words. Vocabulary growth during the preschool years is phenomenal. Estimates of the meaningful vocabulary of average first grade children running to more than 20,000 words are now generally accepted (9).

Church (10) believes that the child's single-word communications stand for a complete thought--that his cognitive and interpretative ability outstrip his articulatory skill. The child's earliest combinations of words occur in grammatical sequence, often repetitions of sequences he hears. Soon, however, he is aware of classes of words and is able to place them in sequences like those he hears. When he has learned classes of words, he may play with one word in combination with a variety of others. The two-year-old's sentences are condensed, consisting of the words that carry meaning. During the third year, he begins to use structural markers, such as articles, prepositions, and plural forms. At first these may be used inconsistently, but soon he masters the patterns he hears and may overgeneralize by applying the most frequent forms to irregular instances, adding "s" to _man_, for instance, or "-ed" to _come_.

In a study of preschool language development, McCarthy (31) found that the average length of verbal response varied from one word at 12 months to 1.7 words at 24 months, Young's study (45) of parts of speech used by 74 children, ranging in age from 30 to 65 months, showed that pronouns and verbs constituted 55% of total words used, nouns 16%, adverbs 10.9%, adjectives 7.1%, articles 2.4%, conjunctions 1.7%, prepositions 4.3%, and interjections 2.8%. In a study of 2, 3, and 4 year old children, Erwin and Lee (12) noted that 3 and 4 year old children used more pronouns than nouns. At age four, there was a marked increase in verbs, pronouns, adjectives, prepositions, and conjunctions. They also found that mazes (noises, holders, repeats, and edits) increased from age 2 to age 4. However, the length of mazes tended to decrease during these years.

Fisher (14) observed that all types of sentences have appeared by the end of the fourth year for superior children and that the per cent of grammatically incomplete sentences decreased with advance in age up to the second half of the fourth year and then remained fairly constant. Boys used more incomplete sentences than girls. McCarthy (31) found that by 4½ a child uses all parts of speech and all inflections of the language of his environment. Loban (27) concurs in this opinion, expressed also by linguists (16, 15), that by the time he enters school a child knows the basic patterns of English sentence structure. From his longitudinal study, Loban (27) notes that in the elementary grades the distinguishing characteristic of the verbally competent child is not his knowledge of basic sentence patterns but his ability to generate variations within the patterns, to manipulate elements within the sentence.

Several studies indicate that there is little change in children's sentence structure between grades one and five (21, 40). During these years Watts (44) believes that increasing verbal competency is revealed by the child's increasing accuracy in expressing logical relationships. Children should be able to recount an experience in chronological order, with the teacher's promptings, by seven. But the ability to outline the pros and cons of an argument does not develop until about age fourteen. Church (10) says that at seven children need help in developing even simple definitions.

The use of complex sentences is usually regarded as a mark of maturity in the use of language. Hunt's study (21), as well as LaBrant's (22), reveals that as children grow older they tend to use more subordination, thus ordering a greater number of ideas within a sentence. Hunt points out that up to the eighth grade sentence length does not seem a significant index of language development. But he suggests that a study of non-clause structures (phrases, verbs, nominals) might be fruitful in determining language growth in the elementary grades.

According to Carroll (9), all measures of linguistic proficiency indicate the superiority of children from high socio-economic levels. Moreover, studies consistently indicate that girls to age 9½ years are superior to boys in articulation and word usage, as well as in length, complexity, and grammatical correctness of sentences.

Piaget's studies (33) of children's thought and language revealed, in a very dramatic way, that the child's thought processes are different from the adult's. The child's speech is ego-centric; he confuses self and environment, real and unreal, animate and inanimate. He develops cognitively as he interacts with his environment, separating, categorizing, generalizing the phenomena of his world. Throughout the elementary school years, his thought processes are predominantly syncretic. At age six, the proportion of egocentric responses are from 43% to 47% of all spontaneous responses. At age seven, the child begins to engage in real conversation, in a real exchange of information and opinion. At this age, too, the child often manifests a need to unify beliefs and opinions, to systematize them and to resolve contradictory opinions. Thus, his speech becomes like the speech of adults--socialized speech.

Vygotsky (43) agrees with Piaget that egocentric speech decreases as the child matures, but asserts that it merely ceases to be vocal and instead becomes "inner speech," as the child learns to think words instead of pronouncing them. This inner speech is different from external speech: greatly condensed, with subject omitted, only predication and words that carry meaning preserved. This inner speech, then, is thought itself--concerned with semantics, not with phonetics or syntax. Because the structure of inner speech is different from that of external speech, the individual may experience great difficulty in expressing his thought, in translating his inner speech into external speech. Vygotsky states that direct communication is impossible since communication can be achieved only in a roundabout way; thought must pass first through meanings and then words. And the sense of a word, both for speaker and hearer, is the sum of all the psychological events aroused in the consciousness by that word--meaning is just one aspect of a word. Thus, really to understand another's speech is to understand his thought.

The role of inner speech in the learning process, as well as the immature learner's need to manipulate objects in the learning process, is suggested by a series of studies by two Soviet psychologists (17, 37). Working with unsuccessful first graders, they analyzed the process by which arithmetical concepts are acquired and evolved a series of steps to enable children to learn what they had been unable to learn in the regular classroom. The steps of the process were outlined thus: (a) Teacher "sets the stage" for the learning experience. (b) Child learns to make relevant physical responses with concrete objects, e.g., counting with sticks or arranging cut-out numbers in order. (c) Child masters the action and the concomitant audible speech. Gradually the child replaces the concrete operations with verbal operations. The physical props are removed gradually and the child is allowed frequent returns to the previous level of operation. (d) The child transfers the action to the mental plane; in other words, the steps of the process become covert. This, too, is accomplished gradually; the child is allowed to whisper when he needs to. (e) The final step, consolidating the mental action, is mastered when the child can omit all vocal concomitent responses. Mastery makes available immediate solutions to problems that originally involved many laborious steps. Presumably, with normal children the steps take place so rapidly they go unrecognized. The studies suggest that talking to himself is a fruitful and realistic way for the child to respond when he faces a particularly difficult task.

Language probably affects cognitive process in various ways. In some cases, verbalization seems to interfere with learning by adding complexity to simple visual-motor performance. As discrimination becomes more difficult, however, relevent verbal cues speed concept formation. The child appears to progress from use of the utterance of another person to an overt utterance of his own and, finally, to covert responses that guide his behavior. As children get older their own verbalization becomes an important source of stimulation. Luria (29) theorized that communication is the young child's primary reason for verbalization, but that as the child matures his verbalization gradually comes to serve an additional purpose--though he probably does not realize it: to mediate and regulate his own overt behavior. Luria's studies indicate, furthermore, that behavior conditioned without verbal association is relatively unstable, is dependent on reinforcement, and disintegrates at a slight change in the situation. Behavior that is conditioned by verbal association is quickly acquired, relatively stable, and generalizes widely.

The patterning of perceptual abilities and communication skills which characterize a child are peculiar to him and do not necessarily conform to group patterns. In reviewing research studies of children's language development, McCarthy (30) observed that language as an area of a child's development reveals greater variation than almost any phase of growth. Early (11) states: "Such striking differences are evident in the language attainments of children of the same age group" that this gross generalization is all we can be really sure of at this point: "a command of oral language symbols is prerequisite to understanding the second-level abstraction represented by printed /and written/ symbols." Moreover, she comments that in considering composition in the early grades the concomitant skills of spelling and handwriting cannot be minimized.

In considering written composition at any grade level, Early (11) finds it useful to think of three kinds of writing: personal, functional, and creative. She says the lines of demarcation are not perfect, but these three major groups help in identifying different purposes and therefore different methods. "Balanced programs for all children at every grade level include all three, but emphases shift as children mature and special interests are identified." She points out that the emphasis should be on personal writing for immature children--the normal child in primary grades and slow-learners throughout the grades. Functional writing, expository writing, becomes increasingly important in the elementary grades. Creative writing, as an exploration of an art form, she would not restrict to the bright or the mature, recognizing that creativity is not an exclusive characteristic of the mentally superior. Relevant to this last idea, she says: "We talk a good deal about the influence of reading upon writing; we should consider also influences which flow in the opposite direction: writing upon the appreciation of literature."

Certainly, the composition program will be an integral part of the larger language arts program and the still larger school curriculum, for the child's language and cognitive development are inseparably related.

CHAPTER IX

PSYCHOLOGICAL CONCEPTS ESSENTIAL FOR THE EFFECTIVE TEACHING OF THE LANGUAGE ARTS*

A recent report of the Curriculum Commission of the National Council of Teachers of English placed at the very core of the educational process, adequate communication and understanding. Communication, which is the ability to make one idea the property of two or more persons, being at the core of the educational process, means that the various skills are important, not as ends in themselves, but because they are the basic tools through which knowledge in the various subject matter areas is acquired. When a psychologist estimates the ability of a child and determines that he is "educable," he means that the child has the mental ability to acquire a working knowledge of the basic tool subjects as a foundation for his further education.

The language arts are usually broadly described as _listening_, _speaking_, _reading_, and _writing_, and they are usually named in that order because that is the sequence in which the young child acquires these various skills. The infant listens to the voices of others in his cradle long before he utters meaningful sounds himself. He understands the emotional tone and absorbs the atmosphere of the home, for many months before he is able to use the first word with meaning. In fact he understands the language of others and responds to verbal commands such as "Pat-a-cake," "Bye-Bye," and "How big is baby," long before he uses words and phrases in speaking. He even responds to the gestures of others, and communicates with others in his own gesture language, long before he uses true oral language. During this time, however, he is not completely mute for he is using his vocal mechanisms in babbling and echoic play and imitative jargon, making sounds that sound like mother's, and constantly reassuring himself with such sounds which make it seem as if mother were there. What happens to the infant in these early months is very important in laying the groundwork for later language growth, for during this pre-verbal period the desire to communicate with others, or the tendency to withdraw from social intercourse may be established.

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*Dr. Dorothea McCarthy, paper presented at the English Curriculum Study Center, University of Georgia, January 16, 1964.

There is a wealth of evidence in the psychological literature to show that the more a baby is stimulated vocally, smiled at, and talked to in a warm and friendly atmosphere, by someone who cares for him and really loves him, the more he will engage in vocalization, and the better start he gets in language learning. Speaking and oral communication come next in the learning sequence, and most children use their first words with meaning around the end of the first year of life. The year-old child uses about three words on the average. He usually stays in the one-word sentence stage for the first half of his second year, and between eighteen months and two years of age he usually begins to put words together into simple sentences. Phrases are heard about two and one-half years of age in occasional utterances, and by three years of age the normal child is a regular chatter-box, talking in three- and four-word sentences with occasional longer bursts, during most of his waking hours.

The mother is the child's first language teacher, and much of his later academic progress depends on how well she does her job during the child's infancy and preschool years. The mother's skill as a language teacher determines to a considerable extent how effectively the child will be able to understand others and to communicate with them when he enters the larger social sphere of the school after the relatively restricted society of the family. If baby-talk has been tolerated and understood and used back to the child in the home, he will be almost like a bilingual child upon entering school, and will have a much more difficult time making himself understood and in understanding the speech of teachers and of other children in the classroom. His ear will not be attuned to the language of the community, and he will have much to unlearn. This unlearning process will undoubtedly involve much frustration, perhaps even ridicule, which may in turn lead to feelings of inadequacy and subsequent behavior problems.

The teacher is a mother substitute for the young child who is entering school; and each child in the class will at first expect the teacher, as the authority figure, director, and caretaker of the group of young children, to behave like his mother. He will begin by reacting to his teacher in the same ways that he has been accustomed to reacting to his mother. The teacher who has thirty children in her class is thirty different people in the private worlds of the thirty individual children in her class, and each child, in his own way, will test out the limits of what he may or may not do in the new situation with this new authority figure. If his mother has been hovering and over-protective, he will be likely to assume a dependent relationship to his teacher and expect expressions of love, affection, and physical care from her. If his mother has been rejecting, hostile, harsh or forbidding, he will be likely to come to school with an attitude of hostility, a chip on his shoulder, completely unable to accept the teacher's expressions of friendship, interest, and affection. These are new qualities in his experience which he cannot quite let himself believe. For it is a basic tendency in human behavior to try to make each new experience relate somehow to the old--to make things jibe and fit together. This is what Dr. Prescott Lecky (24, p. 154) called "self-consistency." The greater the contrast, therefore, between the atmosphere of the home and that of the school, the more difficult it will be for the child to work out a reasonable reconciliation.

If a teacher can listen to a child's oral language with a carefully attuned ear, she can tell much about his readiness for further work in the language arts. Does the kindergartener answer in nods and monosyllables, or can he form complete sentences? Are these sentences only simple, declarative sentences, with no phrases or clauses, or can he occasionally toss off a really complex and well structured sentence? Can he understand and use prepositions and connective words? Does he qualify his nouns by using descriptive adjectives, and his verbs by adverbs telling how actions are performed? Is his articulation clear? Does he mumble or speak in baby-talk with infantile lisping, or babyish "r" and "l" sounds? (Does he speak of Thister Thusie, Wan down the Dwiveway, Twistmas twee, Wittle WuWu?) What about the fluency of his speech? Is he relaxed when he talks to children and to adults? Does he show spontaneity in expressing ideas? Does he ask questions in order to gain information, or merely to gain adult attention? Does he show a great deal of tension in speaking to adults, or before a group, so that his speech is blocked and repetitious?

Does he ignore classmates, or his teacher, and shut them out from his world of fantasy as he plays, talking only to himself, if at all? These and many similar questions should guide the teacher in making skillful observations of her new pupils. Careful study of a child's communicative skills can be one of the best clues to the state of his mental health. The teacher must meet each child on the level of his own stage of language development, and take him along a little farther, sometimes only a little way, but often much farther, on the road to effective communication.

Language learning has often been discussed in psychological and pedagogical textbooks in a rather cut-and-dried manner, perhaps in terms of behavioristic conditioning or the laws of learning or in very boring and unrealistic accounts of word lists and vocabulary counts. Recent writings are making the descriptions of the child's learning to speak much more dynamic and are stressing the importance of the role of emotion and the child's affective life as a vital factor in his growth in language and communication. Many years ago when I first became interested in children's language development, I pointed out that children first talk when they are aroused emotionally. The earliest utterances which we recognize as meaningful expressions are usually highly-toned emotionally. The child first talks when he feels strongly about something and really wants to express a need, want, or desire. This early observation was not appreciated in its full import for some time, and only recently by an integration of observations of the conditions under which infants vocalize and clinical observations of the emotional disturbances accompanying language disorders in older children who turn up in our clinics, we have come to a fuller realization of the importance of the emotional, affective, or conative aspects of the acquisition of language.

M. M. Lewis (25), the British psychologist, in his recent volume How Children Learn to Speak divides infants' early sounds into the comfort sounds associated with the feeding situation--mouthing, cooing, and gurgling sounds--and the discomfort sounds or those associated with hunger states and other sorts of physical discomfort. These sounds constantly evoke responses from those around the child who are themselves speakers. Usually under favorable environmental circumstances in the family circle, adults attend to the child's needs and wants so that his utterances do not go unheeded, but do gain for him attention and care. In other words, his noises are rewarded. Someone not only feeds him or makes him more comfortable, but smiles at him and usually speaks back to him thus encouraging more vocalization. Lewis (25, p. 143) says, "A child's progress in speech will to some extent depend on the way in which others respond to his cries and gurglings. If he is frequently allowed to cry for long periods without anyone coming to him, then his cries will not easily be connected by him with the satisfaction of his needs. . . . If, when he gurgles, nobody joins in with a smile and a word, the incentive to make further sounds will not be strengthened." "On the other hand," says Lewis (25, p. 144), "A child's progress in speech may be slowed down if others are too attentive in anticipating his every need . . . The conditions most favorable to the growth of a child's expressive cries and gurglings are, therefore, an even balance between not helping him enough and helping him too much, between lack of concern for him and over-anxiety."

It is clear that "for language to grow . . . the child must respond to the speech of those around him." At first the child is seen to smile at the sound of the human voice, especially that of the mother, and very shortly thereafter he is heard to make some of his own comfort sounds in return; and by the fourth month, or thereabouts, he seems to respond differently to pleasant and to unpleasant tones of voice used by others. Lewis (25) puts it very well in summarizing one section of his book where, after admitting that these observations are commonplace and almost universal, he points out that this is why "they deserve our closest study. They are worth our attention and detailed analysis precisely because it is in these small events that we find the roots of every child's greatest achievement--his ultimate command of human language, with all that this means for his life as a human being."

Language develops in a growing child who has certain endowments. His sensorium, especially his hearing and vision, must be normal for the normal development of speech to occur. His neurological mechanisms, especially the central nervous system, must be intact, and his peripheral motoric equipment must be without deficit or impairment, if the truly remarkable language growth is to occur normally in infancy and early childhood. Any delay or irregularity in physical, motor, or sensory development may produce some delay or irregularity in his language growth. But normal organic endowment is not enough to assure normal language growth. The child's environment with which he has an opportunity to interact is extremely important for his intellectual and affective life to progress normally. Many children with normal hearing, nervous systems, and articulators are very retarded in language growth because of severe environmental deprivation (26).

The environmental deprivation I tend to think of as coming under four different forms, but these may, and often do, occur in combination. The first is the lack of an appropriate language model in the environment. Perhaps no one talks to the child or expects him to hear and understand, or treats him as if he will talk some day. Or, if he is talked to in the environment, the language model provided may still be very defective and not conducive to normal language growth because, instead of setting a model for the child to imitate, the doting parents may repeat baby-talk back to the child, thus making him perseverate on infantile levels. Or the language model may be inadequate in that it is either brief and fragmentary, or in conflict with the community of speakers to which the child belongs. Some families communicate in grunts or snorts and use little verbalization. Parents who are bilingual, a nurse with a marked accent, or English-speaking parents with foreign accents, present conflicting and ambiguous language patterns for a child to imitate which may retard his learning. Highly verbal, sophisticated adults may speak correctly in the presence of a young child, but may talk so completely over his head as to fail to communicate with him or make him desire to communicate with others.

A second important environmental influence on the development of oral language is the lack of richness and variety of play materials available to the child in the home. The youngster who lives in a well-furnished home, has many playthings in a variety of colors and materials, many story and picture books to look at which are used and read to him by interested and affectionate adults who really teach the child names, actions, and qualities and help him to say them after them, and relate the pictures to reality, has much to stimulate his language growth. Such homes and such parents do much to send better pupils to school. On the other hand,the child who grows up in a bare city tenement or a country slum area, with no toys or picture books, and who never has a bedtime story, is bound to have a limited vocabulary and few ideas to communicate regardless of the normality of his organic endowment. The child who lives in a hut on a farm with taciturn tenant farmers will also get off to a slow start in oral language and communicative skills. These are the kinds of children who are so slow in language growth that they often present a picture of pseudo-feeblemindedness, in spite of normal endowment, simply because of extreme paucity of intellectual stimulation. If a barren environment provides no objects to ask the names of and no interested people to tell what they are called, the child does not have a chance for normal intellectual growth which occurs only by healthy interaction with a varied environment which stimulates his natural curiosity. Similar conditions sometimes contribute to the retardation of the institutionalized child.

Still a third type of environmental deprivation is lack of the security that comes from love and affectionate care. The child whose mother does not genuinely love him and show him normal maternal affection often receives minimal care, little vocal stimulation, or smiling attention as an infant; so that his early vocalizations are not rewarded and reinforced. In fact, he may be allowed to cry unnoticed for long periods of time, so that he may suffer or actually be punished for vocalization. He gets little reassurance that all is well from a mother's friendly voice so that he fails to develop basic trust in others and faith and hope which are essential to normal ego-development. Even if a child has a good affectional relationship with a good mother for a few months and then is deprived of her care, due to her desertion, prolonged travel, hospitalization, or return to work, without having an adequate mother substitute at a crucial stage of his development (usually in the second half of the first year of life), he may suffer serious emotional harm which often shows itself most conspicuously in language retardation or stunting of his language growth in some way. In such cases when the mother is restored or an adequate mother substitute is provided, the child often makes rapid strides particularly in physical and motor growth, but the language growth seems to be almost permanently impaired, or at least is much slower to respond to remedial steps.

Still a fourth environmental deficit may be a distorted or unhealthy parent-child relationship. Such a relationship can affect the child's growth in oral language. The mother who shows an overly possessive or severely demanding attitude toward a child and over-anxiety concerning his speech can also create problems in the child's ability to communicate effectively. She may continue to keep him a baby and fail to train him in self-help and independence at the proper time. Such a pattern usually shows itself in continued infantile speech characterized by infantile "r" and "l" sounds, mentioned previously, and perhaps a lingual lisp or unfortunate articulate problems. Still other mothers may pay normal maternal attention to children and become concerned about them only when they are sick, so that the children develop hypochondriac and/or psychosomatic complaints which so often accompany certain language disorders, such as stuttering.

There is abundant evidence in the literature to indicate that the amount, quality, and continuousness of maternal care are definitely related to the child's progress in language growth. Only children, who have the longest and most intense relationships with their mothers, are almost always accelerated in oral language. Twins, and other multiple-birth children, who never have the mother completely to themselves but always have to share her, are nearly always more retarded than single children who are members of a sibship. If the quality of the parent-child relationship has been good, of a wholesome type, the child is likely to react badly to any change involving loss or diminution of this relationship. But the good mother, who is sensitive to her child's needs and anticipates and prepares for changes which involve emotional weaning, can usually effect essential changes easily, gradually, and without any traumatic regressive reactions on the part of the child.

Many mothers of children with language disorders, especially mothers of stutterers, present a picture of overpossessiveness, domination, and ignoring behavior, in relation to their sons especially, which creates in the boys confusion, insecurity, resentment, and hostility, along with an unhealthy dependency which is often difficult or impossible to break.

Speech defects have been found in most surveys to be the most frequently occurring handicaps requiring special educational services. Since the mentally retarded, the deaf, and the hard-of-hearing, as well as those suffering from physical handicaps of cerebral palsy and other types of brain damage, very frequently have serious speech defects which require remediation before these children can make any appreciable academic progress, speech therapy is one type of service needed by most multiply handicapped children. Parents vary greatly in their habitual tone of voice in speaking to young children and in speaking to others in their presence. The general atmosphere of a home situation--whether it be one of harmony, love, and affection, or one of constant quarrelling, bickering and recrimination--will give very young children quite different auditory stimulation and conditioning as to what the speaking voice is to be used for, and the manner in which it is to be used. As Low, Crerar, and Lassers (28, pp. 361-368) state in their interesting and timely article on Communication Centered

Speech Therapy, "There is considerable evidence that normal speech patterns develop out of successful communication relationships. It is known that most children who come from happy homes do develop normal speech; but where a child is deprived of rewarding communicative experiences, speech problems and personality problems frequently develop. . . . A child does not retain infantile speech patterns," they state, "simply because of lack of speech stimulation or because of poor speech models. It is more likely that he speaks this way because of failures or difficulties in coping with some of his communicative relationships." These authors conclude that in the re-educative process with children having speech problems, it is necessary to "emphasize improving the context in which he has daily communicative experiences and improving his total communicative behavior." One little girl, who was hard-of-hearing, heard only the shouted, harsh commands and "No's" in her environment. For her, communication was unpleasant, and she lacked the normal desire to speak until a hearing aid revealed to her the pleasant tones of voice and that communication could also be gratifying.

Much interest is being evidenced currently in identifying and developing means of helping the environmentally deprived child. These studies are summarized in an excellent review by Everhart (13) in which he points out that auditory memory span for phonetic elements is associated with intelligence. Auditory memory span for connected speech is of tremendous importance in enabling a child to succeed in school, not only in following the many verbal directions of the teacher, but also in reading and remembering material heard. Perhaps the old adage of "in one ear and out the other" is quite an exact description of the actual difficulty of many poor achievers. These children often panic at having to give back orally, and they need much preliminary training in auditory memory span using short materials, together with much adult acceptance and reassurance. Many of them can succeed in giving back a single syllable, and even with single word repetition, but cannot cope with meaningful material in context. Sometimes, if given much time and acceptance with reassurance, verbal material heard can be recalled, and such partial success can be very encouraging to these children.

Children first speak of things which are present in their environment, naming all objects they see. This is probably responsible for the very concrete and specific words children use at first. Their language and their thinking progress from the very specific and concrete to the very general and abstract. When asked to define a word, a child will usually tell something about its color or shape or an outstanding feature such as a pit in a peach or a tail or wings on a bird. Only much later can they employ the abstract idea that the peach is a fruit, or a bird is an animal, thus classifying the objects into categories. Still much later is the child able to give a good synonym for a word he is endeavoring to define.

Some time after the ability to talk about things present is noted, children develop the ability to use the word for an object and to talk about things which are not present, but which they recall from previous experience. This is evidence of the developing of memory. They not only name the chair they are looking at, but can speak of the chair upstairs or in the other room. Their use of space words is especially interesting. First they look and point to things at a distance, then they respond to space words when they are used by others; next they use space words spontaneously, and finally when answering a question.

Quantitative expression reveals their growth in numerical concepts. Three-year-olds have few quantity words in their vocabularies, such as "some," "many," "all," "several," "two," etc. By seven years of age, however, most children use at least nine such quantity words in their vocabularies.

Children's use of time words is also very interesting and quite contrary to many of our usual curricular techniques of teaching verb tenses. It was found that about 56% of what children said was in the present tense. Next they used the future tense, but for only about 10% of what they said and this tendency did not appear until four years of age. The past tense was used relatively late, and then it rarely referred to the remote past, but only to the previous day or earlier the same day. Much more research should be done on the use of time words, for what little has been done is most promising. Children who are very secure and who have learned to trust loving parents are quite superior in their use of time words. Those who have been shunted around from one foster home to another, those raised in institutions, and those who are juvenile delinquents have been found to be inferior in their knowledge of and use of time words. Somehow this ability to wait, to trust, to predict events, and to foresee the consequences of one's actions, and to postpone gratifications appears to be basic to the moral development of the child and to the development of conscience (18, 4, 6).

One important aspect of language development which must be kept in mind in any attempt to understand the transition from home to school is the matter of the amount of talking that is done by the child in both situations. Talking is an aspect of development that is in the ascendancy in the preschool period. Between three and five years of age the normal child in a fairly relaxed and permissive home atmosphere is extremely productive orally. The Brandenburgs (5) reported on a child (keeping an all-day record of his conversation) who at the age of 40 months used 11,623 words in a day, or an average of 950 words per hour. By 52 months this child was using almost 15,000 words in a day. Nice (32) reports on another child who used 10,500 words in one day, and Bell (3) reported on one at 3½ years who used 15,230 words in a day, and another who at four years of age used 14,996 words in a day. Teachers traditionally underestimate the amount of language children use. These figures make us pause to think about the tremendous amount of practice in the use of oral language preschool children get in the favored home where language is stimulated and encouraged, and how much such practice is missed by the child who is delayed six months or a year in the onset of language.

It is evident, therefore, that there is a tremendous output of oral language on the part of normal preschool children. Suddenly when they enter school, this flourishing output is cut off, for, of course, all cannot talk at once, and the formal restriction of the traditional type classroom must have a severely inhibiting effect on such children who may very well develop severe anxiety over the mere requirement of keeping silent so much of the school day. They may develop a fear of talking, for the very behavior which has become habitual at home, incurs the displeasure of the teacher, who obviously cannot encourage each child to continue talking in school as much as he probably had been doing at home. One cannot help but wonder what the effect is on the child's mental health to have to suddenly inhibit this customary outpouring of speech, especially in a situation when there are so many people present to be communicated with and a new and provocative environment to ask questions about.

Fortunately, many schools of today are being more permissive and are allowing children to converse with one another in small groups. But even in the fairly progressive and permissive school setting, the percentage of curtailment of verbal output must place quite severe pressure on many children.

This effect may, however, be quite different for children from various kinds of background. For the child who comes from an institutional environment, there will be little change; yet, he is most likely to be retarded in oral language and to need the greatest amount of pre-reading stimulation and broadening of experience. The repression is likely to be greatest for only children, especially only girls, who are likely to have the most advanced linguistic skills upon entrance into school and who have had the largest amount of continuous adult attention. However, the child who is the baby of a large family may never have been able to get a sentence in edgewise and may have had his wants anticipated so much that he has had little need to talk. Such a child may be completely baffled by being expected to tell a story before a class.

There are wide individual differences in the level of oral communication which children manifest at the time they enter school. When they come to kindergarten, they come with either accumulated assets or accumulated deficiencies in their communicative skills which the teacher must try to estimate, often with reading readiness tests. In the light of the aforementioned findings, several broad guidelines may be mentioned as factors to be considered in deciding whether or not a child is ready to begin formal instruction in reading. Boys are likely to be slightly more immature in language development than girls (30), particularly in matters of syntax and articulation, although their vocabularies are usually about the same or a little in advance of those of girls. Children from upper socio-economic brackets are likely to be more advanced than those from lower socio-economic groups. Only children are likely to be quite accelerated; twins are more likely to be retarded, as are children who were born prematurely. Children who have spent all or part of their preschool lives in institutions or under foster-home care are likely to be less ready to begin reading than those who have always lived in family settings. Some of these may have suffered permanent damage and may never catch up. Those who show left-handedness or ambidexterity are likely to have some difficulty in beginning reading, as are those who have recently moved to a new home, or who have recently had to accept a new baby in the family (31). Probably the best way to determine whether or not any of these handicapping circumstances has actually affected the language development of a particular child is to sample his oral language either in longhand or by means of a tape recorder. If he is able to construct an occasional long sentence which is grammatically correct, if he shows interest in the printed page, or in identifying and writing the letters of the alphabet or his name, he is probably ready to begin to read (35).

School entrance not only necessitates the turning off of the voluminous practice in oral language, but the usual pre-primer and primer present very simple and uninteresting material to be read which is most repetitious and far below the level of the child's oral communication. The secondary forms of language--reading and writing--are so slow and laborious and hinder the communicative process so severely in the early learning stages that teachers are really challenged to keep up motivation and interest in the written word.

Before children can begin to write compositions, they need to have a variety of experiences to enable them to have content to write about which is very real to them. It may be necessary to reach into the rather sterile and barren environment of underprivileged children to find something they know about before they can write. This is the reason why the field trip is so often the helpful common core in giving children an experience which results in the class composition at first, and on which different children are later able to elaborate more fully.

We hear much these days about the concept of creativity and trying to find the creative child. Often one or two really creative children in a class can be utilized to promote creative writing in the others. One teacher had a very heterogeneous group in the fourth grade, two of whom were very creative. She might ask these two children on Friday to write Christmas poems over the weekend. On Monday their Christmas poems read to the class would stimulate other children to write one. A teacher does not have to withhold the assignment from the gifted child until it is assigned to the whole group. This is the kind of thing that the really creative teacher can do, after she has recognized individual differences. She can utilize these children to be pace-setters in particular aspects of teaching. Certainly the area of writing is one field in which educators can and should encourage children to be productive. Often it is possible to capture for permanent records the delightful spontaneity of the oral composition which can be preserved on a tape recorder and later put into written form.

Children should be encouraged to get their ideas down on paper to preserve them even if the first draft is only in crude form. They should be helped to realize that nothing is final just because it is down on paper, for it can always be revised and improved. If they can come to realize that even professional writers do not write everything perfectly the first time, but revise their work often several times, they will develop the important quality of self-criticism and the ability to evaluate and to improve their own work.

Unfortunately in our efforts to get children to write neatly and to observe the conventions and mechanics of writing we often, without realizing it, shut off the delightful spontaneity and creativeness of childhood which is so difficult to recapture once it is lost. Many children become inhibited in regard to writing because they think the entire story must be clearly in mind before they begin to write. Obviously this is beyond their limited attention spans so they block on even getting started. Perhaps even after a good start they want to use a word they cannot spell and after a long bout with the dictionary, the spontaneity and enthusiasm for the story may be gone. It takes really skillful teaching to help children bridge the gap between their spoken and written vocabularies and skills.

For some children, the major aspect of the problem of getting words down on paper may be that of motor coordination involved in the sheer mechanics of shaping letters and placing them on the page in legible fashion. Many do not have the drive and interest to overcome both the spelling and the motor coordination hurdles at the same time. The bright and creative child often has so much to say that the sheer intellectual and motor effort involved in writing a composition will slow him up and exhaust so much of his reserve energy that he gives up in discouragement with only a small fraction of the story committed to paper. The whole experience then is likely to be frustrating rather than a gratifying creative effort. It seems to me that dictating to a tape recorder should be helpful here, and then writing their longer efforts in several writing sessions in which attention can be concentrated on penmanship, spelling, and making the necessary improvements from oral to written work. If tape recorders are not yet available, typewriters and teacher's recording can work out a balance between the child's writing skills and his creative ideas. The child can gradually take responsibility for writing a little more in each lesson.

In trying to find topics suitable for children's compositions, it is often helpful to study what kinds of things they like to talk about in discussion periods. One interesting monograph by Baker (2) studied children's contributions to discussion periods in grades two, four, and six. The second-graders devoted almost all of their discussion time to their own activities, or to their homes; whereas by sixth grade they told of material which had come to them vicariously, most often through their reading. The fourth-graders were midway between in their use of immediate experience and vicariously acquired information.

A rather elaborate investigation at Minnesota by Lester E. Harrell (19) compared the oral and written compositions of 320 children aged 9, 11, 13, and 15. The average length of stories written in response to a movie shown in class increased with age, with girls writing longer stories at each age than the boys. In the oral stories however, although they also increased in length with age, the boys gave longer stories at the three upper age levels. At all ages the oral stories were longer than the written ones. The hesitations, the "ah's" and "uh's," accounted for 2% to 4% of the total number of utterances and showed no relation to age or sex; but repetitions and corrections decreased from 16% at 9 years to about 8% at 15 years. Children in this study used more subordinate clauses in writing than in speaking, and this difference increased with age. They also used more adverb and adjective clauses in their writing, but a greater percentage of noun clauses in their speaking. They used a greater percentage of all types of adverbial clauses in speaking than in writing, with the exception of clauses of time and cause. In none of these measures of oral and written language were these children approaching a mature level.

Once children get their main ideas down on paper and have a beginning, a middle and an end to a theme or composition, they can be helped to evaluate their own work, to improve ambiguous or unclear sentences, to enrich descriptive passages by the addition of carefully chosen adjectives and adverbs and to build their vocabularies in a more natural way than the frequent word list drill which is so often artificial.

Children sometimes have serious blocks on writing assignments in that they cannot decide what to write about. Often a whole week end can be ruined by a vague or poorly understood assignment which calls for something not within the child's experience. This kind of anxiety created about writing can develop very unfortunate attitudes towards the process of writing which may become life-long handicaps. Not all children, especially boys, can do highly imaginative or fanciful type of writing which many women teachers try to elicit. Bright boys who are interested in things and who are very close to reality may do very well on expository writing, but be quite unable to describe scenery. The budding lawyer might do very well with an argumentative assignment, but be completely unable to think up an imaginative fairy tale.

Sometimes children write very personal material of an autobiographical nature. They may write about some "long-long thoughts of youth" which they would be embarrassed to share with classmates. Writing is an excellent projective device which often proves very enlightening in the office of the clinical psychologist. For this reason teachers should develop a fine sensitivity in regard to professional ethics in the way they handle confidential material which may come to them through children's writings. Respect for the child's confidences so revealed is of primary importance. Once a teacher demonstrates that he or she can be trusted with such material, more is likely to be forthcoming, often with mutual benefit to the teacher's understanding of the pupil and further growth in the student's writing skills. Giving children the opportunity to indicate which compositions they are willing to have read in class and which they do not wish to share is often a helpful device in this connection.

Warmth, acceptance, understanding, and confidence are human qualities that many fine teachers have and do use effectively in their work with children. Psychologists do not have any corner on these personal characteristics. Many teachers can acquire these attitudes if they will only stand back and look at the situation and study their relationships with students and give of themselves as dedicated people, not afraid to show genuine interest in pupils as persons.

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PART IV

THE STRUCTURE OF ENGLISH: CONTRIBUTIONS OF LANGUAGE SCHOLARS

Introduction

Linguistics affords a scientifically sound approach to the study of language structure, an approach predicated on an understanding of the nature of language itself. Perhaps, as Dr. Lindemann (8) has suggested, reconsiderations of the phenomena of language that have been asserted during the past thirty years may give rise to language instruction challenging enough to make children aware of "how alive, how fascinating, even dramatic this thing called his language really can be. . . . The reason for his boredom and his inept handling of the language is simply that he has never been made to understand it, never been made to take it really apart and to see what it is like inside."

The material of this section provides a minimal framework for the teacher who would guide children's language development. Such a teacher must understand the nature of language and know something of Latinate, structural, and generative grammar. None of the so-called new grammars have been developed completely, but both the structuralist and the transformationalist provide significant insights, based on different ways of analyzing a language. Without teaching grammar as such, the teacher who really understands the structure of English can use the insights derived from the various systems to make language activities fruitful and challenging. The concepts, the approaches, even some of the terminology can be a part of the child's language environment. From such an environment the child acquires skill in using the resources of his language and experiential readiness for a later systematic study of grammar. The important point is that all he learns from a linguistically knowledgeable teacher will be sound, relevant to his developmental needs, and well integrated.

The material in this section is given in three chapters. The first, "The Nature of Language," defines language and discusses three sub-systems, or three ways of analyzing language: the grammatical, the logical, and the rhetorical. The discussion implies the complexity of skills required in composing in written language.

The next chapter, "Foundations of Language from Linguistics," distinguishes between traditional and structural grammar, pointing out differences in their goals and methodology. The chapter concludes with a cursory discussion of generative grammar, touching upon those insights which teachers can use with elementary grade children.

In the last chapter of this section, the structural devices of English are presented succinctly. Even before a child enters school he knows these devices, in the sense that he uses them. However, conscious awareness of them may make for increased skill in the comprehension and expression of ideas.

Dr. Lindemann (8) has reviewed briefly the linguistic developments that provide a perspective for Chapters X, XI, and XII:

> Actually although even English departments in colleges have only recently and, in some instances, reluctantly been made aware of it, in essence, structural grammar is not entirely something new. In fact, as early as 1818, Jacob Grimm in his Deusche Grammuatik, like Bopp, Zeus, Schleicher, and the other "comparative philologists," as they were called, and their followers, the "neo-grammarians," already show an analytical and categorizing preoccupation here and there with the structure of the older languages, and Brugmann in his monumental comparative grammar of the Indo-European languages so breaks down syntax into its components and words into as yet inexplicable "formans" that he would be quite at home among the most avant garde grammarians of the moment. But it was not until after the pioneering work of the Italian linguist Ascoli, in 1870, and the brilliant teaching of the great Frenchman Ferdinand de Saussure in the 1880's that we find the true analytical spirit of structural grammar becoming embodied in something approaching an organized discipline. Since then the Russian Troubetzkoy was instrumental in establishing the discipline at Prague, while other influential centers were established in Paris, Copenhagen, and New York, the latter more or less dominated by the disciples of the school in Prague.
>
> Structural linguistics grows out of the pioneering work of the phonemecist. And the phonemecists are chiefly responsible for what might be called the contemporary view of language, a view that can be resolved in not an absolute but in a relatively inclusive definition of language, a definition from which all other preoccupations with language will best proceed. The definition is simple. It states that language is a system of arbitrary vocal symbols by which thought is conveyed from one human being to another.

CHAPTER X

THE NATURE OF LANGUAGE*

A novelist creates a world which will remain to readers centuries afterwards; a poet imprisons a moment of insight; a child scribbles his first six word sentence; a girl records last night's date in her diary; a college student writes home for money; the President composes a policy statement; a committee of statesmen frame a constitution; a graduate student labors at his thesis. All are examples of composition, some trivial and momentary, others profound and enduring. All are created by a common process and differ only in sophistication. But to understand this process we must understand the nature of language, the basic ingredient.

What is it, precisely, scientifically? One of the values of linguistics has been to reduce language to its basic elements and to provide us with a set of characteristics which enable us to describe language and the process of linguistic communication more accurately than was possible in the past. In the light of these findings, language can best be defined as an _arbitrary_ _system_ _of_ _symbolic_ sounds. Each of these terms is pregnant with implications. Only if we understand them and their implications can we understand their application to the process of communication.

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*Dr. William J. Free, paper presented at the English Curriculum Study Center, University of Georgia, 1964.

1. Language is sound.

Language is a vocal system. It is a stretch of sound shaped by the articulatory organs into meaningful patterns called phonemes. The phoneme has been defined as "a minimum unit of distinctive sound" (5, p. 79) which functions to keep the utterances of a language apart (6, p. 15). As Pike has pointed out, "speech . . . consists of continuous streams of sound within breath groups; neither sounds nor words are separated consistently from one another by pauses, but have to be abstracted from the continuum" (9, p. 42). The phonemes, or minimum units, of this continuum are distinguished from one another by patterns of contrast. Individual sounds are meaningless when isolated. But a stretch of sound, such as /fainboi/ in the sentence "John is a fine boy," is meaningful not because of any inherent meaning in the individual sounds but because of the pattern of contrast between component sounds. Thus language might be thought of as a code of sound waves which must be received and decoded before they have meaning. The key to the code is our familiarity with how the sounds fit together. We separate the clusters of phonemes into meaningful units called words.

Writing is simply a graphic representation of the patterns of phonemes. In English, graphemes have phonemic reference (5, Chapters 25 and 26). That is, the graphic symbol *b* is used to stand for the phonetic noise represented by the phoneme /b/. However, this correspondence is not always one to one. In the word *phoneme* two graphemes *p* and *h* are used to represent one phoneme /f/. The relationship between phonemes and graphemes is complex and produces special problems with spelling and reading. But from the standpoint of composing, it is sufficient to note that when we compose in writing we are merely using graphic symbols to preserve in a permanent medium the transitory sound waves which are the real essence of language.

2. Language is symbolic.

A linguistic symbol is a unit consisting of a stretch of sound and a concept. Language thus contains a basic dualism, or, more accurately, a triad. Something signifies something; signified and signifier fuse into a unit different from either. This unit is difficult to describe because our words often carry connotations which distort our meaning. Perhaps we can best approach the problem metaphorically. A linguistic symbol is a unit as a chemical compound is a unit: H^2O is a two-part compound, water; but neither of the parts alone is water. Both are gases. Similarly a stretch of sound is not a linguistic symbol unless fused with a concept by the human mind into a compound. The sound itself is an unattached, meaningless noise until a community of human beings arbitrarily decide to allow it to become identified with an element in their experience--a concept. And, according to Langer, the concept can be retained in the memory and used by the mind only when fused with a sound signal; or, in her words, "a word fixes something in experience, and makes it the nucleus of memory, an available conception" (7, p. 113). This new bond is an exciting and uniquely human experience. Both the sound-signal and the concept are interfused with a vastly greater potentiality than either possessed alone; like the compound H^2O, they assume a new mode of being. This new mode of being can be expressed in its own formula (10, pp. 66f):

$$\text{Linguistic Symbol} = \frac{\text{Signified (Concept)}}{\text{Signifier (Sound-image)}}$$

3. Language is arbitrary.

Language consists of arbitrary sumbols, not inherent signs. Smoke is an inherent sign of fire because it is produced by fire. Our senses, seeing or smelling smoke, connect this impression with related sensations of fire--heat, the destructive power of flame, fear of being burned, etc. But the phonemes /s/ /m/ /o/ /k/ which produce the audible image which we symbolically indicate by the written word smoke is an arbitrary symbol of the physical entity produced by the fire and identified by our senses. In Paris it is called *fumee*, in Berlin *Rauch*, in Warsaw *dym*, in Rome *fumo*, in Istanbul *duman*, and in Canton *in*. In no instance is there an inherent relationship between the phonemes which constitute the symbols and the physical entity symbolized; they are purely arbitrary.

4. Language is a system.

Or, to be more accurate, it is several systems. These systems are the means by which a language combines its linguistic symbols onto larger utterances. Of particular importance are three: the grammatical system, the logical system, and the rhetoric system.

The grammatical system is that set of signals by which a language combines its words (linguistic symbols) into minimum utterances called *sentences*. Bloomfield has defined a sentence as "an independent linguistic form, not included in any larger linguistic form" (1, p. 170). Consider the unit of language "I walked to town" in the following exchanges: "What did you do this afternoon?' "I walked to town." "What is the weather like outside?" "When I walked to town it was raining." In the first exchange the unit "I walked to town" qualifies as a sentence because it stands alone--has no grammatical connection with any other unit of language. But in the second exchange "I walked to town" participates in a larger linguistic unit, "When I walked to town it was raining." The significant differentiation is the grammatical connection to "it was raining."

Fries calls grammar "the devices that signal structural meaning" (4, p. 56). The structural meaning of words within an English sentence is indicated by a system of categorizing words into parts of speech on the basis of their form and use, by the order of the words in the sentence, by inflectional endings affixed to words to indicate their grammatical use, and by a class of words--articles, prepositions, conjuctions, etc.--whose chief function is to indicate grammatical relationship, and by intonation or its written substitution, punctuation.

Utilizing these devices, the English language produces four characteristic structures. Predication is a structure consisting of a noun and verb, a subject and a predicate linked to it. This subject-verb construction is the heart of the English sentence. Closely related is complementation, which links the verb to a second (or to a second and a third) noun called the complement. The favorite English sentence type--subject-verb-complement--results from a combination of these two structures. A third structure is modification, or the linking of two words in such a way that one qualifies or somehow changes the meaning of the other. The fourth structure, coordination, is simple the linking together of two words or groups of words which are of identical grammatical structure. English builds its sentences with these four building blocks and a series of transformations and substitutions based on them. With its genius for great diversity within a small number of structural units, the English language can build sentences to any length of complexity and subtlety that the human mind can devise.

A second system of language is that whereby two or more sentences are linked together in meaning. This system is logical rather than grammatical. However, certain words and structural signals in the language are used primarily to indicate this logical relationship, and their functionings can be systematically studied in the same way as those of grammar. If, for example, a mother says to her child: "I am going to the store now. When I get back, I will play with you," she has uttered two independent sentences, each with its own grammatical signals. The logical relationship between them, that of time, is indicated by "when." The two sentences are furthermore linked together by the fact that the subject of the first sentence is also the subject of the second. Composed human discourse, as distinguished from haphazard random combinations, is a network of utterances linked together by transitional words, word repetition, synonymous reference, pronoun reference, and often merely by juxtaposition implying logical connection.

A third language system is the rhetorical. A writer is employing rhetoric when he constructs his sentences in such a way as to appeal to the aesthetic sense, to awaken the emotional involvement, or to engage the belief of the reader. In many respects the logical and rhetorical systems overlap. When a writer or speaker arranges his ideas in logical relationship, he hopes to engage the belief of his reader; but he may do so without also awakening the emotions or the aesthetic sense. The writer or speaker employing rhetoric draws upon a body of language patterns appealing to his society. Such patterns are communicated by the mores of society and do not depend upon schools or formal statement. The original rhetorician, Aristotle, merely described the complex existing rhetoric of his day; he did not invent it or dictate it to writers. Any teacher of rhetoric can be aware of those patterns of language which affect his society and attempt to communicate this awareness and a fluency in using the patterns to his students.

CHAPTER XI

FOUNDATIONS OF LANGUAGE FROM LINGUISTICS*

The metaphor contained in the title "Foundations of Language from Linguistics" suggests some species of building of which either language or linguistics or both form the foundation. This raises the question: what are we trying to build as teachers of English in elementary school, and what relationship does this building have to the field of linguistics? Probably we can agree that we are building the child's fluency in using the English language, his ability to produce easily the proper word and the proper syntax to express his thoughts and feelings in any given situation. Certainly then the linguistic foundation of this building warrants our attention.

The word linguistics simply means the study of language. Yet to many English teachers it conjures up images of strange and forbidding terminology, of impossible-looking diagrams, and of calculus-like formulas. Yet traditional grammar is a form of linguistics which has its own strange terminology, its own awkward-looking diagrams. The teacher finds traditional grammar familiar; therefore, it is clear. But put yourself in the place of the student in approaching traditional grammar for the first time. It is as foreign to him as transformational grammar or any other of the newest forms of linguistics seems to you. Part of the difficulty is failure to understand the nature of language itself and the aims of the various branches of linguistics.

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*Dr. William J. Free, paper presented at English Curriculum Study Center, University of Georgia, May 14, 1965.

The real difference between traditional grammar and structural grammar lies in how they approach the problem of describing our system of language. Both describe the same language. If you really understand the nature of language, you can understand both types of grammar and see the advantages and disadvantages of both when applied to classroom teaching. Certainly you should not throw out traditional grammar and adopt structural grammar. The only sane approach to the teaching of English is to understand the nature of language, to understand the motives and methods of the different grammars, and to apply that understanding to the classroom situation, maybe even on an individual teacher-to-child basis, for the grammar that teaches one child may fail to teach the next.

The first English grammar to achieve a widespread influence was by an Anglican Bishop Robert Lowth, A Short Introduction to English Grammar in 1762. Lowth based his grammar on two principles: first, on his own idea of logical usage.

and, second, on the analogy of English to Latin and Greek, chiefly Latin. Lowth's grammar and its imitations dominated the study of English until about 1891 when Henry Sweet published A New English Grammar. Sweet introduced into the study of English a scientific spirit similar to that created by the early German grammarians, particularly Jacob Grimm, the collector of fairy tales and one of the great students of Indo-European languages. But even Sweet retained many of the analogies to Latin and many of the prescriptions advanced by Lowth.

The modern revolution in the study of language began with lectures by Ferdinand de Saussure in Switzerland in the early 1910's, and in this country with Sapir's book Sound Patterns in Language in 1925 and Bloomfield's Language in 1933. Both the traditional linguist and the structural linguist are seeking the abstract patterns of language. The chief difference between them is in their approach and in their aims.

The traditional linguist's plan was to prescribe a doctrine of correctness in the use of language. He believed that given two alternative forms of expressing the same idea, one is preferable to the other for some reason that can be demonstrated either by the application of reason or analogy, or by appeal to social respectability, or by some other criteria. The structural linguist, on the other hand, seeks his abstract patterns by looking at the forms of the language apart from their relationship to meaning, logic, other languages, or even the social context. His aim is to produce as accurate a description as possible of the single phenomenon he studies. The linguist observes the facts of language, makes generalizations about them, and then verifies or rejects his generalizations by applying them to the actual reality of language. In short, he follows the classic scientific method.

Of course there are advantages and disadvantages to such a scientific study of language. The chief advantage is that it tends to produce a greater accuracy in describing the thing itself. It avoids the fallacious statements caused by mistaking language for the human meaning which it expresses. The chief disadvantage is probably quite apparent: it abstracts language from its social context. Language is a social instrument, a human instrument; and when the linguist begins examining it abstractly as something that can, as Francis (3) said, be separated from the rest of the universe, he has distorted the nature of the entity that he is studying. The only sensible position for the teacher of English is that of trying to understand the intentions of both and applying their methods creatively.

In noting some very specific differences, remember that traditional grammar initiated the prescriptive approach to grammar that has dominated the teaching of English to our day. The traditional grammarians made many of the distinctions of usage that formed the fundamental basis of the teaching of English: for example, the distinction of lie and lay as two different words; the condemnation of between you and I, it is me, who is it for? Without disparaging the teaching of usage, let us realize that in teaching usage we are teaching acceptable social conventions, not grammar.

The second difficulty with the traditional grammar based on analogy with Latin is that its description of the structure of English is often faulty. Admittedly traditional grammar is relatively accurate, a phenomenon which can be explained by the fact that both Latin and English belong to the same Indo-European language family and share the same basic structures. But there are inaccuracies in traditional grammar in the areas in which English, which is a Germanic language, and Latin, which is an Italic language, have developed differently historically. For example, Latin has six inflected verb tenses, each inflected for number and person. So the speaker or reader of Latin functions within a rather complex set of paradigms. English, being a Germanic language, is inflected for only two tenses, present and past. There are no inflections for number and only one for person--the addition of -s for third person singular present tense. So, for all practical purposes, where Latin contains six complex paradigms for each verb, English has only three forms, the infinitive, the -ed form, and the -s form. All other distinctions of time in English are made by the use of an auxiliary word plus either the infinitive or the _ed_ form. Yet, in analogy to Latin, traditional grammar makes children learn English paradigms for six tenses, three persons, and two numbers, which do not exist.

Another example is traditional grammar's treatment of gender, which classifies English nouns according to biological sex: _boy_ is masculine, _girl_ is feminine, and _rock_ is neuter. But modern English has no grammatical gender. Grammatical gender is a relationship between two words which does not have anything to do with sex or biological gender. The confusion is caused by a rather complex process of sound changes through which English lost all of its gender distinctions between Old English and the 18th century. Lowth and his imitators, who were ignorant of Old English, assumed that since Latin and some other languages had gender, the same distinctions must exist in English.

Another major difference between traditional grammar and structural grammar is that traditional grammar is often inconsistent in its approach. For example, not only does it confuse the social function with the grammatical and the Latin forms with the English, but it indiscriminately mixes definition by form, function, and meaning. Traditional grammar defines a noun as the name of a person, place, or thing, which is a definition by meaning, a semantic definition. But the same grammar will define an adjective as a word which modifies a noun, a definition by function. The problem is not just one of inconsistency but also of inaccuracy. For example, the words fire, happiness, and charity are not persons, places, or things; yet all of them are recognized as nouns in certain contexts.

In contrast, a nonsense sentence will illustrate the structural approach to the parts of speech. In structural linguistics, on the first day of class, the instructor may put on the board this phrase from the Jaberwacky poem from Alice in Wonderland: "Twas brillig and the slithy troves did gyre and gimble in the wabe." He will then ask the students to identify the parts of speech, which they can do immediately, with some surprise at themselves. They know that troves and wabe are nouns and that gyre and gimble are verbs; yet, it is obvious that neither troves nor wabe are names of anything. How do they know what parts of speech these words are? When they come to understand how they do know, they have gone a long way in understanding the methodology of structural linguistics. The secret, of course, lies in word order and in recognition of certain key grammatical signals.

The most recent approach to linguistics is generative or transformational grammar, which is both the most complex and currently the most popular from the standpoint of experimental use in the public schools. Basing their work on Noam Chomsky's Syntactic Structure (2), Paul Roberts and others have written texts utilizing the principles of generative grammar. Generative grammar differs from both traditional grammar and structural linguistics in that it describes language as a process rather than an abstract pattern. Both the traditionalists and the structuralists seek an abstract pattern in which language will fit. Transformationalists say: "How do people actually produce or generate streams of language that are grammatical?"

Generative grammar grew out of the programming of computers for language translation. Its principles are called *rewrite rules*, of which there are two types. One is the rewrite rules which will generate basic sentence forms; the other is the transformational rules which will change one sentence form to another.

Let us briefly consider a rewrite rule. The transformational grammarian, beginning with the idea of writing a sentence, asks: "What is a sentence? How can you transform the concept *sentence* into reality?" The ideal sentence can be rewritten in the two concepts: noun phrase and verb phrase, and they make a formula:

$$\text{Sentence} \xrightarrow[\text{Means rewrite}]{\qquad\qquad} \underset{\text{Noun Phrase}}{\text{NP}} + \underset{\text{Verb Phrase}}{\text{VP}}$$

Then, the noun phrase can be written

$$\text{NP} \xrightarrow{\qquad\qquad} \underset{\text{Transformation}}{\text{T}} + \underset{\text{Noun}}{\text{N}}$$

"Transformation" here means that there are several alternatives. The transformation can simply be a deletion, the absence of something. If the sentence were "John hit the ball," instead of "The man hit the ball, "the transformation would be the deletion of any other element, leaving the word "John." In the case of "The man hit the ball," you have an article, so

T - - - article

T - - - the

N - - - man

Similarly, VP - - - - V + NP

The verb can be a variety of things too complex for our brief consideration. The point is that the difference between generative grammar and other kinds of grammar is that the transformationalist is interested in the process by which man creates language forms, not in purely abstract patterns.

From the teacher's standpoint the most useful thing in generative grammar is the double transformational rule--that is, combining two sentences into a single sentence. Here are two sentences that an elementary student might compose: "John milked the goats. It was easy." We may make the addition of the grammatical connector _for_ to the first sentence. This addition forces the transformation of the past tense from _milked_ to the infinitive _to milk_. Combining the two, we say "It was easy for John to milk the goats." A second possibility involves transforming John to the possessive _John's_, _milked_ to the participle _milking_, and deleting _it_ to produce "John's milking the goats was easy."

Or we may delete it and was, transform easy to easily by the addition of a suffix, and produce "John milked the goats easily."

The process of double transformation is, of course, similar to that of subordination in traditional grammar. The difference is that the generative grammarian emphasizes the process of addition, alteration, and deletion whereby two forms are combined to produce one sentence; whereas, the traditional grammarian emphasizes the resulting pattern of subordination.

Many of the complex diagrams and terms that the transformational grammarian would use have been omitted from this discussion. But the differences in terminology and the mechanics of presentation are less significant than the fact that by teaching the child the process whereby he actually fashions words together into sentences rather than the mechanics of a dry abstract pattern, we increase not only his fluency in using language, but his understanding of the structure of his language as well. The teacher, too, must possess this understanding; otherwise he will be unable to communicate it to the child. No system of grammar is perfect and none will solve all the problems of teaching fluency in the use of language. The teacher's job is to understand as well as possible the different approaches to grammar and to apply them creatively in the classroom.

CHAPTER XII

THE STRUCTURE OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE*

I am not so immodest as to believe that I can cover the topic stated in the title of this paper. Nelson Francis uses some 600 pages, after narrowing the topic to the structure of American English. C. C. Fries uses some 300 pages in his Structure of English. Archibald Hill, Zellig Harris, and scores of others have written tomes--all inadequate, as the authors themselves realize--on the subject. So I do not plan to cover the topic. If I could have chosen my title, I would have put a question mark after it. For along with many other people interested in the language, I am looking at the structure of English with a question, indeed with questions, in my mind.

What is meant by "the structure of English?" What place does "the structure of English" have in the teaching of grammar? How does the structuralist differ in his teaching from the grammarian, or grammar teacher, as we have always known him? Have we not always taught structure?

Does the structure of English mean what it always has? Yes, but more so. I think those of us who have taught grammar have always recognized that certain features in our language hold it together, make the syllables and words come out meaning something beyond themselves, are in fact the grammar of the language. We have talked of constructions and of structure and of structural relationships. But many of us failed to really look at the structure of the language.

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*Miss Jane Appleby, speech presented at Summer Conference of English Curriculum Study Center, University of Georgia, 1965.

Let me see if with a very inadequate analogy or two I can point out what I mean. I may teach my students the poem "Shall I Compare Thee to a Summer's Day?" by pointing out that day rhymes with May, temperate with date, shines with declines, etc.; that the rhythm is consistently an unaccented syllable followed by an accented syllable: So long/ as men/ can breathe/ or eyes/ can see; that there are ten syllables in each line; that the end of each line coincides with a grammatical pause; that the first four lines seem to be a unit, the next four another, the third four another, and the final two another.

I may take out certain words and point out that though I do not improve the poem, and indeed probably destroy its beauty, I may substitute other words without destroying any of these characteristics. In the first line, I can read winter's for summer's; in the second peaceful for lovely. For do shake I can substitute disturb; for too short, too brief, etc. I cannot in the first line substitute spring's, nor in second mild, nor in the third bother. Some substitutions I can make with the rhyme words and some I cannot: moderate for temperate and night and sight for day and May, but not reasonable for temperate nor dawn and June for day and May. I can go all through the poem pointing out what is there and what is not; which substitutes are acceptable and which are not. Not only could I do all this, much of this I would do. To identify the various components of the poem is certainly a healthy method of studying it. But if I failed to recognize and to call attention to the fact that this poem fits into an overall pattern--the sonnet--and to tell the students what a sonnet is and what the characteristics of a sonnet are, then probably I am failing to see the poem as clearly as I might and I am not acknowledging the fact that these characteristics fell together other than by happenstance. They are in this poem because they are necessary components for this structure, for what the poet set out to compose: a fourteen line poem in iambic pentamenter, with one of a number of possible rhyme schemes and groupings of lines.

Unfortunately both for this analogy and for students of the language, the English language is not, like the sonnet, made up of 140 syllables which can be seen at once and maneuvered and analyzed. It is made up of what has been thought to be an unlimited quantity, involving seemingly indefinable qualities and subject to unknown variations; and we have accepted as fact that we could deal with only small portions of this limitless mass.

But just as the sonnet has a structure--a set of characteristics which make it a sonnet--so does language: certain definable, if variable, features which make it a whole. To parallel the meter, rhyme scheme, groupings of the sonnet, a language has forms, word order, groupings which are known to its users. These constitute the structure--or, to come full circle, the grammar--of the language.

I may discuss with my students this sentence: "My neighbor's son, who thoroughly enjoys getting involved in political arguments, asked me who I thought was the greatest governor we have ever had, and I am still trying to decide how to answer his question." I cannot say, as with the sonnet: This is a language. But I can, I believe, show why it is language; that is, why it comes out with meaning. First, the sounds within the sentence are among a comparatively few that are available to us: they are the sounds which have become the basic and accepted method of communicating, so that, for instance, such contrasts with much and hutch because we have agreed that s and m and h represent three different things. For the most part, we expect people to learn this level of the language without a great deal of help and supervision. And it may be that we take too much for granted, that some of the blame for our students' inability to use the language more effectively rests on the fact that we do not emphasize enough the distinctions between these sounds, their random use, and the failure of our system of writing to represent them accurately and consistently.

Among the other devices that we use to make our words a part of a language and not simply isolated sounds is the careful placing of them in juxtaposition to each other. As with the sounds, this device is learned almost unconsciously. We learn early that "Dog bites baby" and "Baby bites dog" render different meanings. We very soon learn that *book case* is different from *case book*, and that *school boys* and *boys school* carry different meanings. In the sentence above, *to answer his question* cannot mean to *question his answer*. Of course, word order alone does not determine meaning; but neither does the iambic meter alone make the sonnet.

Another device to give meaning to, or to make language of, our words is form. This involves inflections of which there are only eight in English: two for the noun: -*s* and '*s*; four for the verb: -*s*, -*ed*, -*en*, -*ing*; and two for the adverb and adjective: -*er* and -*est*. To illustrate from the sentence above, the *neighbor's son* (not the *neighbor son*; he may live elsewhere); *enjoys* (not *enjoyed*; he still does); *asked* (not *asks*; it happened in the past), etc. All of these help determine the meaning of our words.

While these inflections affect the meaning of the word, they do not determine what part it will play in the sentence. *Enjoy* is still a verb, whichever inflection is put on it. For the purpose of changing the part the word will play, besides word order, there are certain syllables that can be added. Putting -ment on argue changes it from a verb to a noun; -or changes govern to a noun; -ly changes thorough to an adverb, etc. There is a long list of these affixes which we use to make words play the part and carry the meaning we want them to.

Another structural device in English is a small group of words whose principal purpose is to help establish the meaning of other words. They have to be learned, and usually we learn them without conscious effort, though we rarely consider their importance and they are among the hardest features of our language for a speaker of another language to learn. Their significance to the language can be made evident with a few examples. The best simple one that I know of is not original with me. If you received a telegram saying "Ship sails today," you probably would know what it meant within the context of your life. But as an isolated sentence it can mean, of course, two completely different things. All I need to do to indicate which interpretation is intended is to insert the: "The ship sails today" or "Ship the sails today." Given two words question and answer, I can by the insertion of the determine their structural relationship: "question the answer" or "answer the question."

Another method we use to help establish meaning is agreement. An obvious case where this is true is in such a sentence as "The sheep which are in the pasture are asleep," where *are* is the only indication that we are talking of more than one. But since agreement very rarely is so significantly helpful in determining meaning, it is often ignored.

In speech we have several other devices to call upon for helping determine meaning. By shifting stress or emphasis, we can change *black bird* to *blackbird*; *white house* to *White House*; *suspect* to *suspect*. We realize the difference in the function of the modifying words in *sleeping porch* and *sleeping child*.

Also in our speech we use very slight breaks or gaps to separate some words from others: (1) He wrote the paper carefully / checking every word; He wrote the paper / carefully checking every word. (2) He left her more than enough money; He left her more / than enough money. (3) My plan / to be frank with you / vanished when I saw your face; My plan to be frank with you vanished when I saw your face. (4) The girl who had been dancing gracefully / entered the room; The girl who had been dancing / gracefully entered the room.

Another of the devices to help determine meaning is pitch: He is here; He is here? She came yesterday; She came yesterday? Again, we unconsciously learn this device for changing meaning and even find it difficult to describe what we have done when we use it.

These then are the structural devices of our language, the characteristics that make words into a language: word order, form, word determiners, agreement, stress, junctures, and pitch. Are you beginning to feel like Moliere's character who expressed surprise and pleasure when he learned that he had been speaking prose for forty years without realizing it?

If it is simply the grammatical features of the language that the so-called new grammar would teach, what is so new about it? Three things: first an awareness of the structure, the whole and its components; second, an awareness of what structure, or grammar, is and what it is not; and, third, an effort to see what the language is, not what it should be.

Going back to our sonnet: the structure of the sonnet is not affected by the meanings of the words. Nor do the meanings of the words affect the structure. In line three I may prefer disturb to do shake; I may think that ow'st in line ten is archaic and should be replaced; I may think that line twelve is hard to understand and should be written more simply. But these are not structural changes. It would be ridiculous to say that any word that fits into the structure of the sonnet is as good--that is, as effective, as appropriate, as acceptable--as any other. Obviously, structure is only one layer of analysis.

Just so in language: the structure of the sentence is not affected by the meaning of the words. Nor do the meanings of the words affect the structure. In the sentence "He hasn't never been nowhere," I doubtlessly will find the piling up of negatives offensive, but no structural error is involved. Some teachers tell their students carefully and perseveringly to avoid the split infinitive, but again this is not a structural matter. This sentence, which I heard several years ago, "They clumb out the window and fit right outside the classroom," is certainly not acceptable to modern taste, but we do not change its structure when we substitute verb forms that we now approve of. When we point out that infer and imply are not interchangeable, we are not discussing structure, or grammar. "Which drawer did you put the sox in?" evidently offends some people who do not like to hear a preposition at the end of a sentence. This may be a consideration of clarity or style or personal preference, but it is not a matter of structure.

What I am saying then is that in our teaching there should certainly not be a policy that anything, as long as it fits within the structure, is acceptable. This would be like saying that any sonnet is as good as any other. Shakespeare's sonnets are effective not merely because he fitted his words into the structure.

When we criticize the student's use of language, we should realize--and make the student realize--why changes are being suggested: whether or not he has failed to stay within the structure of the language or failed within that structure to use the most effective or the most appropriate word or combination of words.

The young child experiments with structure. He quickly learns some of its components, especially word order. And for a while his recognition of structure, or patterning, is quite obvious: hearing "he walked" and "she turned" and "they danced" and "we painted," he may very well try "I drinked," "we comed," "they bringed," etc. Or because his elders say "two babies," "two toys," he probably will try "two childs" and "two mans." He is trying to fit his speech into the pattern, and actually he is doing so. It is usually the exceptions in forms that he must consciously learn rather than the structure of the language, most of which he will pick up by exposure. And just as I would not impose a standard of poetic quality on the budding poet until he has mastered the sonnet form, however awkward and ineffective some of the lines within that form, I would allow the person who is learning how to use language to experiment and get familiar with structure before burdening him with the niceties of usage, the importance of clarity, or subtleties of style.

The last line of one of Shakespeare's sonnets is "I never writ, nor no man ever loved." Both within the sonnet and within grammar it is structurally correct. If it appeared on the paper of a student who had gone beyond the elementary stage in his experiment with language, I would put red marks on it. But I would realize and would want the student to realize what I am criticizing: a usage which for some time now people have not liked the sound of and which for that reason is usually avoided by educated people.

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PART V

THE PROCESS OF COMPOSING IN WRITTEN LANGUAGE

Introduction

The term written composition refers to a product of the work of writing; composing refers to the process. Attention to the product and its qualities may obscure the process by which it is achieved. Yet the process is the focus of the writer's energy and activity, and it is the process which must be improved if the product is to become more effective in serving the purposes of the writer.

Focus on the products of learning and thinking has been rather general among teachers for several decades. But this emphasis on the product rather than on the process has had undesirable effects, such as verbalization without meaning and memorization without understanding. The lesser emphasis on the processes of learning and thinking is not surprising, because these internal processes do not yield easily to objective description. However, recent studies of creativity yield some description and measurement of how new knowledge is discovered and created as the product of thinking and indicate the possibility that such processes are available to most persons at some level of usefulness.

This section, then, centers attention on the composing process. The first chapter considers the process of composing in general terms, suggesting that the child's act has similarities to any act of composing and can be used as a means of learning. In essence the act of composing is equated with the act of creating; the child creates--he dictates, he writes, he says--that which has not been said in his way. For him the act is similar to the creative act of gifted individuals who have given some insight into the process. The process is discussed under two major divisions: preparation and actualization. In seeking ideas, in methods of work, in accessing the intuitive faculty--in fact, in every aspect of the process, individuals vary. However, all agree on the necessity of the period of preparation, which normally precedes the period of actualization, although there may be some return to preparation during the period of actualization. The development of self-evaluation habits is considered a key factor, for the critical mind in gifted persons seems to operate in conjunction with the creative. In evaluating each writing, the child should be taught to consider its adequacy and effectiveness in light of his purpose and his intended reader or audience. As often as possible, in making this evaluation he should be aided by having the reaction of an actual reader or audience as well as that of the teacher. From such experiences he develops his own criteria of judgment. In time, too, he learns to assume the role of the intended reader as he writes and revises.

"The Climate for Composing" briefly describes the classroom atmosphere that seems most conducive to the improvement of written expression. The affective as well as the physical and intellectual factors must be unobtrusively engineered if children are to develop freedom and control in the composing process, and judgment in recognizing the areas of freedom in each writing experience.

The last chapter of this section, "The Steps toward Composition," is in essence a summary chapter, bringing together many ideas from various disciplines. In reminding us of the complexity of interweaving factors that underlie written communication, Dr. Hook emphasizes the fact that when we separate the various components for analysis and discussion, we do so only for convenience and by necessity. It is the nature of language and of human thought that we must separate the parts of our discourse in time and space, making divisions in that which exists holistically and should not be separated.

Certainly, before the various ideas presented in this chapter can be used by elementary grade teachers, they must become a part of the teacher's way of thinking, fused and synthesized by her own imagination so completely that holistically they determine her attitude toward learners, toward language, toward the teaching of written composition.

CHAPTER XIII

THE COMPOSING PROCESS*

The composing process is essentially an act of creating. It is a three-fold act: 1. an act of the mind, a judicial mind which analyzes, compares, and chooses and a creative mind which visualizes, foresees, and generates ideas (9, p. 26); 2. an act of emotional sensibility (10, p. 40), a feeling for beauty, for harmony, for the rightness within combinatorial acts (4, p. 7); and 3. an "act of the hand," or what we call technique (14, p. 50), the employment of learned skills for handling elements needed. This three-fold act, the creative process involved in composing, results from a fusion of mental operations. In order to examine this fusion, researchers have looked at it as if the mental operations were partitioned into stages.

Patrick identifies the stages within the creative process as preparation, incubation, illumination, and verification (9). Whiting elaborates on those steps first given by Helmholtz and lists them as saturation, incubation, and illumination (13). Armstrong (2) describes a five-step process of creating: assessing a situation, defining a problem, using the subconscious, consciously producing ideas, and using judgment in selecting the best ideas. Other researchers in the area of creativity have used essentially the same terms to identify "stages" within creation and to separate them, one from another, in order to study them.

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*Dr. Sue Cromartie, paper presented at English Curriculum Study Center, University of Georgia, 1964.

In an attempt to simplify discussion of the composing process in this report, only two broad stages are identified, preparation and actualization. Preparation, in this report, is thought of as that which goes on in the writer's mind before the act of writing begins. Actualization is considered to be the writing act in its consumation. Although preparation is thought to be the initial mental operation brought into play in the composing process it does not cease, nor is it terminated, as actualization begins. There seems to be a shuttling back-and-forth from preparation to actualization to more preparation to further actualization within the process of composing. Vinacke (12, p. 248) recognizes this overlapping and interweaving of the thinking processes employed in a creative act:

> In actuality it would be better to conceive of creative thinking in more holistic terms, a total pattern of behavior in which various processes overlap and interweave between the occurrence of the original stimulus and the formation of the final product.

Although all of life's experiences of the writer are, in a sense, preparation for current writing, and although the writer brings with him to current writing all that he has learned in the past, preparation will be treated here as that immediate, conscious getting ready to write in response to some reason for writing. One's reason for writing shapes his preparation.

With all writers there is a reason for writing. Sometimes this reason is strictly utilitarian: the plumber's supply order; the doctor's prescription; the pupil's unrelated sentences written with a list of spelling words. This kind of writing, the utilitarian, is written as a means to an end, not as an end in itself. It may be good, useful writing, but it is good for something outside itself.

Sometimes the reason for writing is an inner urge, or as Cary defines it, an intuition, a desire to fix down a personal discovery. Cary (6, p. 17) illustrates his meaning by describing Housman's reason for writing about a cherry tree:

> The magic object that started up before our eyes on a spring day in its own individual shape, is apt, in the same instant, to turn into simply another cherry tree, an ordinary specimen of a common class. We have seen it and named it pretty often already. But Housman, as poet, fixed his vision of the cherry tree before it had changed into just another tree in blossom.
>
> Housman fixed it for himself and us, but not by an immediate act, indistinguishable from intuition. He had to go to work and find words, images, rhyme, which embodied his feelings about the tree, which fixed down its meaning for him, so that he could have it again when he wanted it, and also give it to us.

The kind of writing which Cary describes is a work of art. In contrast to the utilitarian, writing of this kind is good not for its usefulness to something outside itself, it is good of its self and for its self. It is an end in itself. Written composition includes all meaningful writing from the strictly utilitarian to that which is considered art, but the variety within the reasons for composing influences the opportunity for creativeness within the writing.

Responding to a reason for writing is active acceptance of the problems of writing. Dealing with these problems constitutes the active and immediate preparation of the writer.

When a writer has an idea, a mental picture, an activated remembrance of an experience (residuals) and a reason (stimulation) for transforming this idea into written language we may say that he has willingly accepted the problem of writing. He has taken for himself the task of transforming a remembered experience into verbal form. His problem, based upon the expectation that his product will reflect his feelings about and his knowledge of the original experience, begins with identifying limits within which he can work and making for himself a pattern for working, a motif, or a schema. The schema is actually a new structure, a modified remembrance. The writer's problem and his preparation vary according to reasons for writing:

In the case of factual content writing (biographies, summary reports, etc.) the writer's experience has been within an established framework of content. His problem includes remaining within the framework of facts as he fuses and translates his own understandings and reflections about those facts. His schema, or pattern, must not distort the sequential factual content; however, the writer has freedom within limits. His plan for organizing thoughts within the limits may be his own or the plan may be imposed upon him as a need of others which he can fulfill.

> The work of the historian is an example of writing within factual content limits. The puppet play written by a child to portray the life of Lincoln is another example. The pupil works from facts gleaned. His problem consists of arranging those facts in such a way that they not only portray Lincoln's character, but that they, also, hold the interest of an audience and can be acted out by puppets. Although the student writer must not distort the character nor the facts surrounding the character, he is free to select from the factual content items which are suited to drama. He may organize those selected facts as he pleases so that they are enhanced or subdued by the characters, by staging, by the lines or by the actions of the puppets.

In the case of imaginative writing or writing from life experiences the problem is greater. It includes establishing one's own limits or framework in which to work as well as planning a schema. From the kaleidoscope of a world of events, the writer selects one, then chooses where and how to set limits around it in order to deal with it.

An example of this is the story of "Buying My Easter Dress":

> Shall I tell about wheedling a little more money from Daddy? Shall I tell about my wishing for a green dress but knowing that, as usual, Mother will buy a pink one? Shall I tell about going to five stores to look before I tried on a single dress? Where shall I begin?
>
> Shall I tell about the saleslady with the funny stiff hair? Shall I tell about the other customers who kept pushing around? Shall I tell about the long mirrors in the dressing room? About the yellow satin chair in there? How much should I include?
>
> Where should I stop? Should I stop with paying the cashier? Should I go on to tell about meeting Daddy at a restaurant to eat lunch before we went home? Should I tell about the wreck we saw on the way home? Should I tell about trying on my new green dress when I got home to see again how it looks and feels? Should I tell about hanging it outside the closet door so that it wouldn't get smashed? Should I tell about calling Jeanie to invite her over to see it? Where should I stop?

Setting limits, or framework, is a part of the preparation for writing for the pupil who writes about life or about his own fantasies. Once the limits have been set, he can begin to prepare the schema.

In the case of writing to communicate, as in letter writing, the problem may or may not include an established imposed content framework. It does, however, present a facet peculiar to pure communication.* It must be organized within an accepted established form. The writer owes this to the reader. The reader must not be expected to struggle with a new letter-writing form. Such a struggle would lessen the reader's attention to the letter content, the writer's message. Within the accepted letter-writing form (heading, greeting, body, closing, and signature) the writer has freedom to organize only the body of the letter in his own way. The writer's schema or plan for this organization may vary according to his picture of the reader.

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*The term "pure communication" is used to contrast that writing which is done explicitly for a designated reader with that writing which is done partly for one's self and partly for possible readers.

With any of the above reasons for writing the writer deals with a set framework or limits, set by himself or imposed upon him according to the nature of the writing. In determining the limits he is at the same time determining his area of freedom. The problems within the area of freedom are self-imposed. Preparation for writing demands finding one's area of freedom and, within that freedom, selecting a schema or design, for writing. The schema may be considered a definition or an armature of the essence of the plan, the "skeletal truth." Around this the writer will formulate a pattern of ideas. Influenced by the scheme he will make decisions about ordering the details within the plan.

> Choosing a schema and ordering a supporting idea around it can be observed as young children draw. A child states: "I am drawing Mama going to town." Mama appears quite large in the picture. The sidewalk is drawn for Mama to stand upon. A store appears on the side. These few items, as they appear in relation to each other, constitute the essence of his idea, the schema. Now the pupil adds a pocketbook to Mama's hand and a hat upon her head. He adds a traffic light and a car somewhere in the picture to help to show "town." He adds, in big letters, the name of the store. He may add items displayed in the store windows. The added details, the supporting ideas, are

organized within and because of the schema.

> An illustration of choosing a schema for writing may be observed in the life experience example of writing given previously. In this, the girl asks herself questions about beginning, about ending, and about the important ideas to include. A supposed choice of schema for this story would be (1) looking at dresses, (2) trying on dresses, and (3) buying one. Supporting details for this choice would perhaps include, for part one, going to several stores, looking at many dresses, and observing other customers. For part two the supporting details might well include a description of the dressing room, the saleslady who served her, and her mother's comments about the dresses. For part three the supporting details would likely include a description of the dress selected and the feeling about it.

Now, the period of preparation for the creator becomes one of exploring in detail the nature of the material he will use as he builds his product. During this period he is dealing with the same range of content which he examined earlier, as he sought his limits or his area of freedom. From the range of content he consciously selects and rejects, combining as he selects. He tries out various ways of organizing the scattered impressions of the experience. He may pull in all sorts of relevant memories, impressions, images, and parallels, judging alternative ways of fitting them together.

The young child often attempts to follow a chronological order of occurrences stringing them together in his conversation with "and then . . . and then." Unless some part of the experience is overwhelmingly central to the pupil composer's memory he continues to look for some pattern.

This preliminary work period is a time of exploration of many elements, many patterns, repeated trial selections and rejections, all tentative in nature. During this re-thinking about the experience the composer is saturated with the fullness of the subject. The result may be that this mass falls into place and writing begins. On the other hand, it may be a frustrating, confusing experience for which he can find no key. He may leave it.

The creator may leave his work because of another necessary activity. If he leaves his problem, temporarily focusing on something else, the period away from the work is often one of incubation. During this time his thoughts may build up to the next working period.

> An example of this occurred in a first grade. Janice learned that her mother had made arrangements for her to have a tonsil operation on Monday. Janice announced that the operation would have to be at some other time because the art teacher would be at school on Monday. Last week she had asked the pupils to have a story about themselves in their minds and to be ready to paint it. Janice stated to her mother: "I can't go to the hospital. My mind is full of my story. I must be at school to paint it. I can't save it any longer."

The need for a period of incubation within preparation may vary from person to person and from time to time (9, p. 19). The length of incubating time required and the activities suited to such time may also differ. When an adult has struggled with a problem, he frequently stops working on it to do other things, to engage in physical exercise or recreation or in other types of work. As he works at these other things, ideas about his problem come to him spontaneously. Each time the same idea recurs he modifies it and defines it more clearly. Finally he realizes "This is it!" The incubation period gives him direction.

The child thinks through his ideas, also, sometimes verbalizing them aloud. His doubts and uncertainties are often expressed as questions to the teacher. His sureties are stated to the teacher, to his classmates, and most of all to himself as he organizes his thinking. His incessant talking is not mere babbling, it is listening to his own thinking. In the case of the child "preparation" and "actualization" are often simultaneous, interfused in such a way that they are inseparable. He writes, stops to think, to question, writes some more, talks out his developing idea, then writes some more. When a child has struggled too long with a problem he, like the adult, will stop. Sometimes he eases his frustrations by going to the pencil sharpener or by teasing the child in the next desk. Sometimes he stops here and does nothing more with his work. hands it in as it is or crumples and throws it away. Sometimes after mental browsing the child is ready to tackle the problem anew with more surety. The period of incubation as a part of preparation may not be needed often by children, but it should be recognized as a possible need.

Implicitly, the purpose of the preparation period is to work toward a view of the finished product. This view is described by some as a "sudden flash," as insight. It appears likely that this view is not so clear and immediate in most cases. Whatever its form, the notion of how the product should appear gives direction to the actual construction of the product. This conscious knowledge of direction is considered by many writers to be "illumination" (10, pp. 37f).

When adults recognize that a right solution has come, they begin to have a feeling of certainty. This is typically accompanied by an emotional reaction of pleasure, even joy or elation. There is an eagerness to work. When a child has his ideas well in hand he, too, shows an eagerness to work. He is often oblivious to others. He does not want to stop until he has finished. He will often work into recess period or into the next class period unless he is stopped.

Illumination is the final part of preparation. It leads directly into the second stage of composing, that of actualization. Joyce Cary (6, p. 42) describes the transition from preparation to actualization in this manner:

> The passage from intuition to reflection, from knowledge of the real to expression of that knowledge in viable form is always precarious and difficult. It is, in short, a kind of translation, not from one language to another, but from one state of existence into another, from the receptive into the creative, from the purely sensuous impression into the purely reflective and critical act."

This is the stage in which the idea is worked out in words on paper. This stage is work. The mind continues to perform judicially and creatively, the emotions continue to react sensitively to evolving ideas. Now, in addition to these, technique is called into play. Bruner says that combinatorial acts that produce effective surprise (his definition for the creative) almost always succeed through the exercise of technique (4, p. 14). All too often, because of the high cost in mental energy involved in this three-fold act, endeavor stops short of final realization (9, p. 43).

The writing act, actualization, demands one's critical, as well as his creative faculties, one's involvement as well as his detachment. The writer must do justice to the requirements of the problem he has set for himself (8, p. 34). He must free himself from his own conceptual system in order to see more deeply, more comprehensively, more clearly the structure of the situation he is trying to achieve (8, p. 39). The creative thinker must stand sufficiently detached from his work that he is able to examine it, criticize it, destroy it, or change its course if necessary. But one can reach this detachment only after being immersed within it. It is a detachment of commitment (4, p. 12).

This may be seen in the creation of a painting, as the painter "paints out" or destroys areas of the work. It may be seen in Schoenberg's description (11, pp. 71f) of his detached and critical attitude toward writing one measure in a musical composition:

> I personally belong to those who generally write very fast, whether it is 'cerebral' counterpoint or 'spontaneous' melody . . .
>
> Thus it will be astonishing to you as it was to all my friends when I came with the score of *Verklarte Nacht* and showed them one particular measure on which I had worked a full hour, though I had written the entire score of four hundred and fifteen measures in three weeks. This measure is indeed a little complicated since, according to the artistic conviction of this period (the post-Wagnerian), I wanted to express the idea *behind* the poem, and the most adequate manner to that end seemed a complicated contrapuntal combination: a leitmotif and its inversion played simultaneously.
>
> This combination was not of a spontaneous inspiration but of an extra-musical intention, of a cerebral reflection.

Actualization demands speculation and deferment. The speculative nature affirms that what is not yet actual is possible. Deferment is the capacity to discard the glittering immediate in favor of a shadowy but possibly richer future. Speculation is belief in one's ability to find a new path for the work. Deferment is stopping to look at the path before venturing too far along.

Actualization involves allowing one's self to be dominated by the object. "You begin to write a poem. Before long, it, the poem, begins to develop metrical, stanzaic, symbolic requirements. You, as the writer of the poem, are serving it -- it seems" (4, p. 13).

In the process of creation the object or idea being worked on begins to have an autonomous, independent life of its own. It makes suggestions to the creator. It takes a hand in fashioning itself. Sherwood Anderson (1, pp. 53f) describes this:

> When it comes to story telling I think that most of us begin our stories on the plane of reality. Something happens that is interesting to us. Among our acquaintances there is some person, a man or a woman, having had certain experiences or advantures in life that fascinate us . . .
>
> The tall, red-haired man you are going to write about, let us say, is a personal friend. You want to protect him so you make certain physical changes in your man. . . . You make him short and broad-shouldered. Now he has stiff black hair and rather small, sharp eyes. Your red-haired friend was named Turner but you give this new one another name. Let us say that you call him Bob Wyatt.
>
> But wait. Look! Here is something a bit strange. Your red-haired friend named Turner has suddenly escaped you. He is gone. Now there is a new fellow come into your consciousness. . . . As you go along with Bob Wyatt everything you say begins to change.

This same recognition of the autonomous nature of a work was noticed as a child was writing a story. He remarked: "I like the way my Wicked Witch talks. I think I will let her talk some more."

Actualization, or the consumation of the creative process, involves the creator with materials or the elements necessary for the construction of the product. His handling of the elements, his technique, is as much a paradox as the above interfused processes. Here the creator respects his materials, but at the same time he dominates and orders them. The wood carver respects wood, almost to the point of being humble before its beauty. However, he takes advantage of it--the form, the grain, and the texture of the wood--and the wood responds to his handling. His respect for the wood in no way causes him to refrain from cutting it. It is his to cut. He cuts with care, however, and with contemplation for the product which will evolve.

The writer respects words and the rhetorical conventions which help to give words meaning. As he handles words in prose or poetry he does so with much the same feeling as that of the wood carver. Words are his to use. Rhetoric is his to use. He handles them with care, however, as he responds to their beauty and order and as he arranges them to conform to his meaning.

A child employed in writing a story stopped to say to her teacher: "My story is about some people in a town named Waverly Hall. I like the name Waverly Hall. It feels good in your mouth when you say it."

The criticism, involvement, detachment, speculation, deferment, and the purposiveness that are interfused in the working process described as actualization demand of the worker revision, rewriting, and redesigning as he works toward accomplishing a unified whole. Children are less prone on their own volition to revise, rewrite, or redesign than are adults. Only an important purpose for revising causes them to sustain interest through prolonged reworking of a project.

CHAPTER XIV

THE CLIMATE FOR COMPOSING*

The classroom climate compatible to creative work, such as composing with words, is subtly and artfully arranged. The arranger, the classroom teacher, is self-effacing in the job. The fact that the climate is "arranged" is made inconspicuous. Only by knowing that such a climate would never "just happen" does one conclude that it must be arranged.

First of all, the classroom climate is conducive to creative work. Conducive is a descriptive term made from the action word conduce, meaning "to lead or tend, especially with reference to a desirable result; used with to or toward." Conducive is a strong and positive word. When it is coupled with climate it indicates that within the climate there is leadership, there are goals, there is forward direction, and there is action. Conduciveness is more than tolerance, it is expectancy.

A climate conducive to composing is a fertile one, enriched with idea-giving, thought-provoking objects and events. There are varied and changing psychological stimuli, varying and changing as their stimulus effect wanes, varying and changing as growth of pupils indicates variety and change are needed. The objects and events constituting a conducive climate are those which are always at the edge of growing--similar enough to those known through past experiences for a pupil to retain confidence in his ability to deal with them, but including enough newness to offer challenge to his thought. For example:

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*Dr. Sue Cromartie, paper presented at the English Curriculum Study Center, University of Georgia, 1965.

> Using the environment to encourage imaginative writing, one teacher now and then brings into the classroom various kinds of objects to place on a table easily accessible to pupils. She says to them, "As you have time today. look at these things." The objects are such things as a broken string of red beads, a scuffed and worn man's shoe, a bird's feather, and a lace handkerchief smelling of perfume. The teacher asks a few questions to start the thinking--"What kind of lady owned these beads? Where was she when they broke? What happened? . . . What kind of man wore this shoe? How did he get it so worn out?"
>
> Always there are several objects which a pupil may examine and reflect upon. Once this teacher carried to class a passport and some foreign money, a cut-glass decanter, and a fur scarf. Another time there were things to taste--a bowl of small peppermint candies, thin lemon slices on toothpick holders, and tiny waxed paper packages of nutmeg.
>
> Using the environment to stimulate expository writing, this same teacher leads pupils toward writing accurate accounts of factual events. Examples of this occurred in a study of the Revolutionary War period of American history. A large reproduction of the first flag of the United States was displayed. As pupils talked about it, the teacher asked, "Who will find out more about our first flag? Who made it? Why was it made? Where was it first flown? Will someone find out all you can about this flag and write us an account

> of your findings?"
>
> An unopened package of cigarettes on the table was pointed out by the teacher. She said, "Do you see this little blue paper sealed across the end of the package? This is a 'stamp' showing that cigarettes are taxed. When someone buys cigarettes at the grocery store or from a machine he is charged for the cigarettes and for the tax. The user of cigarettes pays tax money to the government everytime he buys cigarettes. In colonial times the British decided to tax tea. The American colonists thought this was unfair. The colonists decided upon an unusual way to show just how much they disliked the taxing of tea. When historians have written about what was done, they have called it the 'Boston Tea Party.' Will someone find out about this Tea Party and write a report to read to the rest of us?"
>
> The children in this classroom write prolifically. The element of environmental change contributes to their interest in writing. The teacher's sensitivity to things which will excite children's thinking underlies this.

Creating a good learning environment is an on-going, active, changing process. Evaluating is part of the process--a continuous questioning of what is there, what effect it has on the learner, and how that effect can be improved.

The conducive climate, with its many and varied knowledge-giving opportunities, accepts the child not as an empty receptacle waiting to be filled, but as a human being with potential mediational skills. Mediational skills involve selecting, organizing and synthesizing knowledge (3).

The climate conducive to composing is planned to lead one on from the thinking stage to the working stage, the composing stage. Such a climate must be nutritive;

additional elements must be provided as they are needed. Reference books, literary works, and dictionaries are some of the elements found to be nutritive to written composition. Space and time for working are necessary conditions in this climate. The leadership within the climate provides opportunities for children's verbalizing, composing and expressing thoughts, about objects around them and events of which they themselves are a part.

One's language is his best equipment for entering a complex world. Language, and an ordering point of view to go with that language, provides a means of simplifying and compacting vast ranges of experience (5). The teacher, whose aim is to establish a climate conducive to written composition, recognizes the value of a rich and stimulating environment and, more important, he provides opportunities for pupils' organizing and ordering this environment while they use its gifts as food for thought in writing.

The climate for composing is more than conducive to composition. It is also receptive to it. A receptive climate is an agreeable one, not a fault finding one. Children's ideas and suggestions are heard and valued rather than ignored or prevented. When a half-formed idea is ignored or repulsed it is likely to die at that point. On the other hand, in a receptive climate the half-formed idea--the groping for words--is nurtured and a way is opened for this idea to grow.

In the receptive climate, a pupil is respected. Others have faith in him. He comes to have faith in himself as his contributions are received as worthy ones. There is a warmth among the people in this climate, a warmth that comes from each having confidence in the other. Here the people are not afraid of risk-taking because they feel secure with each other and because they openly admire and support one who tries new ways. Here the people are not afraid to make mistakes; they know that mistakes can be corrected. The leader and the group members are sympathetic toward mistake-making but are expectant of one's growing from his mistakes. A receptive climate is not an easy one. A receptive climate is one that takes you as you are and believes in your worth to such an extent you find yourself growing.

In the receptive climate there is a feeling of belongingness. The development of belongingness is accompanied by increased security for all members of the group. The greater the belongingness, the greater the ease of significant communication between the teacher and the pupils and among the pupils themselves and the greater the shared pride in achievement of both institutional _and_ individual goals (7).

The classroom climate, in addition to being conducive to writing and receptive of it, also offers a market for children's products. In this climate pupils see the purposes of their writing fulfilled. Their reasons for writing "make sense." Letters are written to real people and are mailed. Written reports of science experiments of one group are read and tested by another group as further experimentation is done. Children's stories and poems which are considered "good" by the children and teacher are treated as literature and placed on the library table, or in the "real library" for others to read, criticize, and enjoy. Plays written by children are produced. The climate for composing actualizes results.

CHAPTER XV

THE STEPS TOWARD COMPOSITION*

In order to present some ideas about essential backgrounds for composition, I should like to discuss with you a child's process of development in his use of language. I propose to examine with you the development in a very young child of knowledge and skill in what we call logic, grammar, and rhetoric. For this exposition I shall draw upon basic psychology, basic principles of logic, basic grammar, and basic rhetoric, and I shall use as my examplar a bright little boy whom I shall call Jerry.

Jerry was born six years ago. We do not know what "learning" takes place before birth, but almost certainly there is some, though of a most rudimentary nature. The world of the unborn child is the world of the womb, warm, small, tight. Obviously the unborn child has no vocabulary, no "thoughts" in the sense that we normally define thoughts. But he has sensations: movement and rhythm and warmth and occasionally discomfort, for example. He does not know the words for these sensations; he does not know that they are sensations; he does not know that there are words. But he is learning--from the time of conception he is learning. These prenatal learnings prepare him for the time when he will emerge into a world filled with a much richer variety of sensations.

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*Dr. J. N. Hook, paper presented at the English Curriculum Study Center, University of Georgia, subsequently published in English Journal, 55:4 (April 1966), pp. 417-424.

The child is born. Immediately he encounters new sensations. There is a change of temperature: the warmth of the delivery room is not the same as the warmth of the womb. He is surrounded by what he will eventually know is a sea of air. He is no longer crowded: the space around him seems limitless, though he yet has no understanding of limits and not until he studies Einstein can he comprehend limitlessness (if then). Perhaps he is slapped by the doctor or the nurse, and the momentary discomfort may be greater, or at least sharper than he has known in the womb, though the infant's awareness of pain is less than it will be later. He begins breathing, and thus still another sensation is his. He utters his first cry, and both the cry and the sound of it are new experiences, as are the sounds of the voices of the doctor and nurse. (Many newborn babies, of course, are temporarily deaf, so that the sensation of sound may be delayed.) The doctor touches him here and there, examing, probing. Some mucus is removed from his nose with a syringe. He is moved about, turned over, in this unfamiliar air that is his new environment. His eyes are open; a multitude of blurred, unfocused shapes swim about him; for the first time he is using the sense that will later enable him to watch a bird or read a book. Something is dropped into his eyes. His feet are pressed against a soft substance and then pressed against paper. Strong medicinal odors surround him, though his sense of smell is not yet developed enough to make them register more than slightly. He is washed, and he is placed in a thing he will learn to call a crib: new sensations again. Perhaps he already feels what he will later call *tired*. He sleeps. Soon he is exposed to more new sensations: water and food taken orally, and hence the first experience of taste; bright lights and dim; the feel of his mother's arms; the sound of a loving voice. He has entered a world of sensations, dimly observed at first, but the source of all the concrete and abstract knowledge that will later become his.

What I have said so far may be diagramed like this, to show the beginnings of all learning:

Date of birth
|Sensations (experiences)

The illustration is open ended at the right because the child's sensations or experiences will continue as long as he lives.

In a few days Jerry is taken home. For several months he sleeps more than he wakes, but in his waking hours the sensations, the experiences multiply. Of special importance is the fact that the infant very early begins to associate pairs of things. For example, he learns that a particular kind of crying may bring him other pleasant attentions; he learns to like certain sounds made by his mother or father and to dislike yells or certain tones of voice; he enjoys being bounced gently on his father's knee; some foods he prefers to others; he starts early to differentiate some colors (at least light from dark); he can distinguish mother from father or sister from brother; he learns by trial and error that some things he can reach out and touch but that others are too far away.

Thinking has been defined as associating one thing with another. The beginnings of thinking, the beginnings of logic if you will, are in these early associations, these differentiations.

Jerry learns early, too, that the sounds that people make are not all the same, and he learns that what he will later call words have what he will later call meaning. His mother calls, "Jerry." At first this means nothing to him, but soon he turns his head at the sound, perhaps smiles, perhaps anticipates that something pleasant is about to happen to him. A little later he will respond to "Jerry" but not to "Sammy" or "Helen" or "Daddy." The word *Jerry* becomes peculiarly his own.

We can now add a second part to our diagram:

Sensations (experiences)

Association and differentiation

The bases of thought, of language, of most of the activities in which human beings engage are in these two open-ended blocks.

Jerry hears people talk, and he himself burbles and squeals and murmurs repetitiously. Since muh-muh-muh is an easy and pleasant sound to make, he uses it often, and his doting mother and father say "ma-ma" to him over and over. Probably much too soon they claim that he too is saying "Mama." The word is not actually in his vocabulary, though, until he applies it specifically to his mother, saying "Mama" and associating it with the person who spends so much time with him. Other single words follow rapidly: "Daddy," "doggie," "bottle," and so on. In each instance the word is the result of the association of a concrete thing and a sound that Jerry realizes has some relevance to that thing.

Let us pause a moment to see where we are in our exploration of our topic. Sensations or experiences must come first, before there can be any thinking; they are the raw materials of thought. Thinking, at least the realization of an association between two things, must come before there can be words. The sensations come one by one, but the infant soon learns to put some of them together. Each word results from the putting together of two experiences or sensations. The order so far, then, is sensation, association, word.

Our diagram now looks like this:

Sensations (experiences)

Association and differentiation

Words

Words, I am saying, result from associating a particular thing with a sound that the child learns may stand for that thing. The sound *dog* is associated with the creature dog.

Jerry learns many single words before he proceeds to the next step, putting words together. The singletons come first, the combinations later. Most of his early words are name words: "kitty," "car," "bus," "bed," "chair." Other words he uses as name words, though teachers will later tell him they are something else: "walk," "run," "pretty," "cry."

The first combinations of words consist of adjectives plus nouns: *big ball*, *pretty kitty*, and so on. It is apparently easier for the small child to make such pairings than it is to put together a noun and a verb. Perhaps the reason is that *bigball* or *prettykitty* seems like a single, unified thing to him, especially if he frequently hears the combination. In other words, probably *big* does not at first refer to size but is only something that belongs in *bigball* to signify a particular ball.

Jerry's parents keep a list of the single words he uses voluntarily, without prompting, before he combines words. There are over two hundred words on the list prior to the day when the sixteen-month-old boy speaks his first sentence. He and his parents are at their summer home, a place with a large groundhog population. Jerry has seen a groundhog a short distance from the door. "Groundhog," he says, and walks away. He toddles over to the door again; the groundhog is gone. "Groundhog went," Jerry says. He likes the sound and repeats it, "Groundhog went."

So syntax is born. Jerry, the transformational grammarians would say, has composed a kernel sentence. Jerry will later be able to generate an endless number of other sentences from that kernel: "The groundhog that was standing out there went away," "There was a groundhog out there, but it went away," "Did you see the groundhog before it went?" and so on.

The creation of the sentence "Groundhog went" represents a huge forward step, involving at least double the understanding and mental effort necessitated by either word alone. Groundhog shows an association between a particular kind of thing and a sound representing that thing. Went similarly shows an association between a "thing" and a sound. The accurate use of either word, then, involves two components. But "Groundhog went" involves bringing together these four components and also associating the two pairs of components in a meaningful way. The step up has been that Jerry is by this time associating components in pairs rather than in singletons. New doors are opening and will always be opening as a result of this ability. Later, as Jerry's familiarity with words increases, he can combine still more components. He will discover that some words have many meanings; he will learn eventually about denotations and connotations and metaphors; he will find that poets sometimes intentionally use words that can be interpreted in more than a single way. Many such doors are visible down the long corridors of a child's years when he first says, "Groundhog went."

From early infancy, even before Jerry knows any words at all, his parents read to him. They read simple stories about babies, they read lilting or soothing poems. They look at bright-colored pictures with him. They let him handle books and give him some cloth books of his own that he can look at, squeeze, fondle, or do with as he wishes. They know that this early association with books can have a profound effect on his language as well as his regard for reading and books. When he is one or two years old, they are exposing him, through their reading, to sentence patterns that he might otherwise not encounter for some time. It's all in the spirit of fun; they put no pressures on him; he loves being read to. Like most children, he begins reciting from the books he has heard. Before he is two, he can repeat page after page verbatim. Often his understanding of the content is incomplete because he knows too little of the experiences that some of the books deal with, but his feeling for sentence patterns grows steadily, day by day.

His sentences rapidly surpass the limitations of "Groundhog went," but he begins at an early age to encounter some of the complexities of language. When Jerry is eighteen months old, his father says to him, "What are you doing, Jerry?" Jerry wants to answer that he is sitting here having fun, but his sentence doesn't come out quite like that. He says, "I'm satting here funning."

I consider that sentence a masterpiece. It has ten or more components, more than twice as many as "Groundhog went." *Satting*, rather than something to be laughed at as an "incorrect" expression, reveals some grasp of what traditional grammarians would call present progressive tense, and the fact that Jerry says "satting" rather than "sitting" reveals that he has an awakening awareness of formal distinctions in the verb *sit*, even though he has not mastered the differences. The use of the adverb *here* is a distinct step beyond the nouns, verbs, and occasional adjectives of his earlier sentences. *Funning* may not be idiomatic, but it is used by analogy with "I'm sitting here playing" or "I'm sitting here eating." (Not long ago I was in a tenth-grade class in which the teacher brightly announced, "Today we're going to start studying a form of the verb that will be new to all of you. It is called the participle." With difficulty I suppressed a smile as I thought of the sentence spoken by the eighteen-month-old boy, "I'm satting here funning.")

So far I have said something about logic, which in its most elementary form is the putting together of things that belong together, the recognition of similarities and dissimilarities. I have said something about grammar (more accurately, syntax), which as I am using the term is the translation of logic into the words and structures that have become customary in a given language. Thus, before the sentence "Groundhog went" can be uttered, the child must go through a complex thought process that psychologists do not claim to understand fully. The child must have seen the groundhog, and his nervous system must have sorted out the visual stimuli to reach the conclusion that the thing seen was an animal and that the animal was a groundhog; then, since the groundhog is no longer visible, a neural connection must be made between groundhog-not-there and groundhog-formerly-there; a conclusion must be reached that, since the groundhog is no longer there, it probably went away; and messages must be sent to the vocal apparatus giving instructions to perform the intricate muscular maneuvers involved in saying "Groundhog went." The fact that all this is done in seconds or even fractions of seconds is a tribute to human intelligence: the electrical impulses of the computer work no faster than the human brain. The computer can perform some tasks faster only because it is wired specifically for a certain purpose; whereas the human mind has thousands of purposes.

Previously we had identified the first three stages in language development: sensation, association, word. Now we have added a fourth: word combination.

Sensations (experiences)
Association and differentiation
Words
Sentences

You will note that each of these is dependent upon the one before it. We cannot combine words _if_ we do not have words. We cannot have a word if we do not have an association between a spoken symbol and experience. We cannot have an association until we have had at least two experiences or sensations to associate.

So far I have said nothing about rhetoric or composition. An article by Richard Ohmann in the November, 1964, _College English_, contains a collection of definitions of the misunderstood term _rhetoric_. To the classical rhetorician, Ohmann reminds us, rhetoric was essentially the art of persuasion. I. A. Richards defines it as "a study of misunderstanding and its remedies." Father Daniel Fogarty says that rhetoric is "the science of recognizing the range of the meanings and of the functions of words, and the art of using and interpreting them in accordance with this recognition."

Kenneth Burke takes a somewhat moralistic view: rhetoric should make it easier for men to share feelings, thoughts, and actions. Richard Weaver is idealistic; since rhetoric is the "intellectual love of the Good," it "seeks to perfect men by showing them better versions of themselves." Marie Nichols argues that rhetoric is "the theory and the practice of the verbal mode of presenting judgment and choice, knowledge and feeling."

I find weaknesses or gaps--or at least ideas that I cannot fully accept--in each of those definitions. Perhaps foolhardily, I shall propose my own: Rhetoric is the structured use of language for a preconceived purpose. I prefer this definition for several reasons. It includes more than persuasion; certainly there is rhetoric in narration and description, for example, and not just in persuasion. I do not believe that rhetoric is a moral matter; it can be used for evil ends as well as for good: Adolf Hitler was in some respects an accomplished rhetorician. Father Fogarty's definition possibly places too much emphasis on words and not enough on structure. So, to repeat, I would argue that rhetoric is the structured use of language for a preconceived purpose.

An individual's use of an embryonic rhetoric probably antedates his use of words, however, just as the ultimate origin of his words can be traced back to his first sensations. For example--and I hope you're not tired of Jerry yet--Jerry, like other infants, learned at a very early age methods of getting his own way, methods for accomplishing a preconceived purpose. For instance, when he was wet or hungry or uncomfortable for some other reason, he would begin whimpering and then, if ignored for a couple of minutes, he would begin crying at the top of his voice. This usually got results (and I'll let the child psychologists debate whether or not it should). So he had his rhetoric: a structured use of sound for a preconceived purpose. On other occasions, he would make use of a silent rhetoric, a language of gesture: wanting to be lifted from his crib, he would smile irresistibly and hold up his arms.

Once he began speaking single words, he used intonation patterns for what may be called rhetorical reasons. One version of "Mama" meant merely that he was identifying his mother by name; another meant that he wanted her to come; another, that he was angry; and so on.

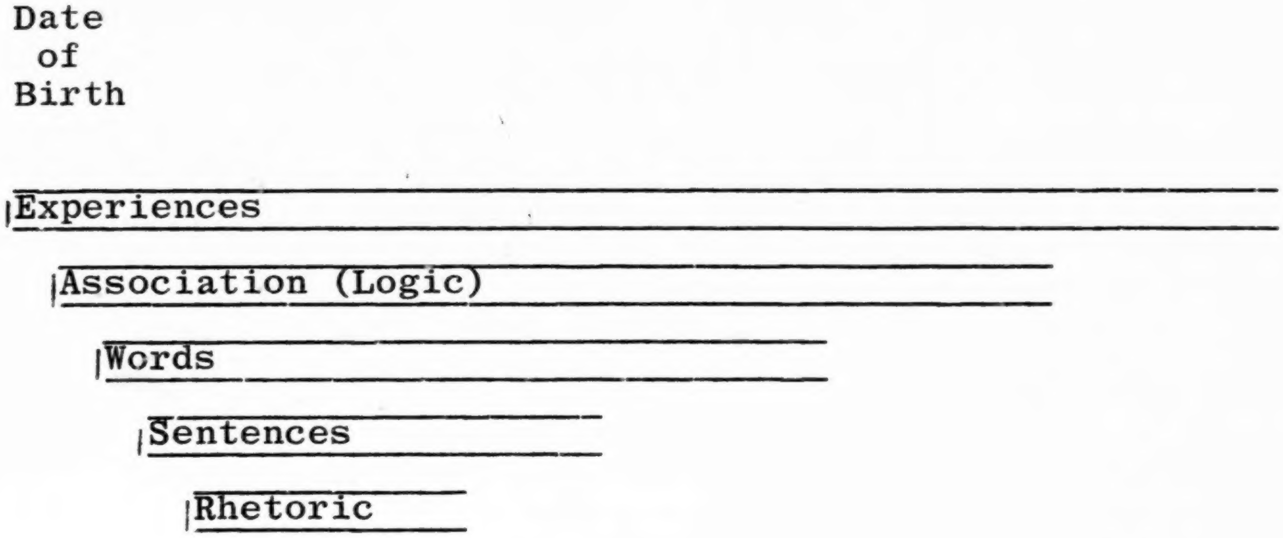
When sentences became possible for him, Jerry's rhetorical devices became much more numerous. (So did his purposes.) He learned when he was two or three, for example, to put his remarks into some sort of context. Before he learned that, he would greet his father with some such remark as "I saw a snake." Then his father would have to ask questions about where and when he saw it and how big it was and what color it was, and Jerry would have to answer. This must have seemed a rather wasteful procedure to Jerry, because he began to supply the context. Instead of saying, "I saw a snake," he would say, "Up by the garage I saw a big, black snake." Somewhat later this became, "When I was playing up by the garage a little while ago, I saw a big, black snake, about this long."

He had grasped an important rhetorical principle, though neither the word _rhetorical_ nor the word _principle_ was in his vocabulary. Through trial and error he had found a way to use a sentence first to set the stage and then to bring on the actors. It was a structured use of language to accomplish his preconceived purpose of giving his father detailed information about an exciting event. Not all children can do this as early as Jerry did; some never learn it. But those who are able should be shown, through example, the value of using the first part of a sentence or a paragraph or a longer unit to provide the background that will make the rest easier to understand.

Jerry's rhetorical devices (he is now six years old) are not confined to giving information. He likes to tell stories, jokes preferably. (Although his jokes are marred by some unnecessary _and then's_, he has learned the virtues of having his facts straight, using chronological order, building up to the punch line, and then stopping. He still laughs harder at his own jokes, though, than anyone else does.) He enjoys making up what he calls "three thing" stories. Someone names for him three things that seem to have little relationship, such as a hippopotamus, a fire hose, and an oak tree. He thinks a few moments, says "Well, once there was a hippopotamus that . . .," and launches forth on a detailed story in which each of the three things plays at least a minor part. The purpose here, of course, is only to amuse, especially himself.

One final comment about Jerry will serve to introduce the point toward which I have been moving. Although Jerry is now beginning to master more and more of the principles of rhetoric, his growth in the first four areas has not stopped. Every day he has new experiences: in school, in playing, in conversation, in reading, and from television. Every day he learns to make new associations, following such logical principles as discovering similarities, discovering differences, putting this and that together, reasoning about why this is true or false, attempting to find explanations of such a phenomenon as the rise and fall of mercury in a thermometer, trying to answer questions that start "What would happen if . . . ?" Every day he is learning new words that are based on his experiences and on the associations or concepts derived from those experiences. Every day he composes sentences different from any that he has composed before. No one of the five elements that I have been describing will come to a halt as long as he is healthy and inquisitive and alert.

Schematically our complete diagram looks like this:



Do not be dismayed because the last three bars are much shorter than the other two. It is inevitable that they be shorter. Experiences and associations among them necessarily precede the words and sentences that can convey the experiences and the ideas that those experiences have generated. Command of ideas and words and sentences will always outrun the mastery of rhetorical principles; without the ideas, words, and sentences, there can never be organized language movement toward a preconceived goal. Wilbur Daniel Steele, who in my opinion was one of the best short story writers this country has produced, once said: "There is a time when a tale is a fine and beautiful creature, a masterpiece without flaw, a drama calculated to move one beyond any drama yet written by man; and that is just before you sit down to write it." What Steele was saying, I believe, is that the writer has had enough experience for his rhetorical effort, that he has applied logic to determine the actions and interactions of his characters and the convolutions of his plot; and that he probably has enough words and almost enough command of sentences to create his masterpiece; but that he lacks enough of the final requisite, the mastery of rhetorical principles that will enable his ideas, his words, and his sentences to march inexorably, unhesitatingly toward their hoped-for end.

Now what of the implications for teaching?

No teacher, I believe, on any grade level or in any hour of class, should concentrate on one of the five ingredients of good writing to the exclusion of the other four. No class hour should be without its new experiences, experiences that introduce, deepen, stretch, challenge, and surprise. We teachers, dealing with literature and ideas and the words that someone has coined to express almost everything that anyone has thought worthy of expression, should never run out of meaningful experiences into which we can lead our students.

No class hour should be without its associations, its logic, its analysis, its freight of ideas. How is this line in this poem related to that? How is this poem related to that? Does this sentence contradict or reinforce that one? Why do you suppose the author included this incident? What would you have done if you had been in this character's place? The questions--to be asked not only by the teacher, please--go on endlessly, for there is no end to the permutations and combinations of the human experiences on which association or logic is based.

No class hour should be without its attention to words. There is a passage in the autobiography of Esther Cloudman Dunn, who for several decades was one of the great teachers at Bryn Mawr and at Smith, in which she recalls a teacher of Greek in whose classes she once sat:

> The day we found the Greek word for "red" in the vocabulary, the teacher seemed to take it up in his hand. He turned it over, like the faceted jewel it was, and showed us its hidden brilliance. The word, he said, showed in its origin how the Greeks made their red-purple dye from a shell fish. It was precious, used for the garments and carpets of kings. When Clytemmestra, conscious of her guilty love affair with Aegisthus, waited for her husband, Agamemnon, to come home from the Trojan War, she decked the palace stairs with carpets of this red dye to welcome him. It was royal compliment beneath which lurked a bloody warning of his coming murder.
>
> We heard how the Greek dramatist, Aeschylus, had used this word, making it flash out again and again through the metrical lines of his great tragedy. The teacher did not tell us that Aeschylus was a classic which we should admire. Instead he re-created, through that word for red, a fearful and violent moment in a great love story . . . It was not a classic but a heightened moment of life.

What this teacher of Greek did, we teachers of English in elementary and secondary schools ought regularly to do. Words are not dry bones. They are flesh-covered; they are symbols, true, but symbols that can evoke constantly the "heightened moments of life."

No class hour should pass without attention to sentences. I don't mean picking out all the direct objects or encircling all the verbs. I do mean noticing how the change of word order in a powerful passage can weaken it. Suppose that Shakespeare had written

> Tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow
> Creeps from day to day in this petty pace
> Till time has recorded its last syllable.

What would have been lost? And you, Susie, sitting here in my class, are saying something very important in this sentence of yours. But it doesn't quite come through with the power it deserves. Can you rewrite the sentence, building it to a crashing, climactic ending? And you, Johnny, you who think that language doesn't matter much, and that the way you write or speak don't make no difference nohow, you probably have a degree of truth on your side. People can understand you when you say "It don't make no difference." But some people are going to close their doors to you because they think it does make a difference. Why close doors unnecessarily?

Few class hours should be without attention to rhetorical principles. Note how skillfully this author has marshaled his arguments. Why is the word sleep repeated so often throughout this play? Would this story have been as effective if this incident had been left out or reduced in length or moved to another place? Fred, your first paragraph deals with Topic A, your second with B, and your third with A again. Would it be more effective to treat A all in one chunk? Louise, this poem is almost good enough to publish in our school magazine, but this one stanza bothers me.

Each student should grow each day, I have been saying. He should grow through new and richer and deeper experiences, through thinking about those experiences, and through finding the devices of vocabulary and syntax and rhetoric that will enable him to relate to others his enlarging concepts of what it means to be a human being.

On the elementary level we have particular opportunities to enrich children's experiences and to help them associate and differentiate the parts of their learning and to find the words that enable them to talk about the experiences. It does not matter, really, whether the experiences are in science or mathematics or literature or something else (they should be in many areas, of course); what does matter is that children need a chance to talk, talk, talk. Especially they need help in comparing: How is this leaf like that one? How is it different? How many kinds of trees can you name? Do they all have leaves that are alike? Do some trees keep their leaves all winter? And so on. The child needs a tremendous amount of practice in associating, differentiating, classifying. And the words, he will learn, help him to classify, to understand, to think. When he is ready for deciduous and coniferous, he has done more than add words; he has added concepts that will aid him in his thinking and writing. The more he gets into the habit of associating and differentiating, the better thinker he will be and the better writer.

What most children need most in composition is not drill on sentence and paragraph form. What they need: a tremendous amount of practice, first oral and then written, in sorting out their knowledge so that they will understand what there is to say about any topic they are capable of treating. Principles of unity, of organization, of coherence--all depend upon such a basic skill as observing how two leaves are alike or how two animals differ from one another. The experience must come first, then the association or differentiation, and after that the words, sentences, and compositional pattern.

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PART VI

OBJECTIVES AND STRUCTURE OF THE CURRICULUM IN WRITTEN COMPOSITION, K-6

Introduction

Jonathan Swift observed that good writing is "proper words in proper places." The first chapter of Part VI sets forth the objectives of the curriculum in written composition in terms of behavior changes that will develop the ability to put "proper words in proper places." The objectives reflect concern not alone for the product of the composing act but also for the process itself, with developing awareness of the various aspects of the complex processes involved in having something to say to someone and being able to express that something effectively. Implied in the objectives is the belief that understanding the nature of language, ability to perceive relationships among ideas, a variety of enriching activities and experiences, and awareness of one's own individuality are basic to the development of skill in communicating ideas.

Chapter XVII describes the scope and sequence of the curriculum. Each specific learning experience is so planned that it anticipates, emphasizes, or maintains and reinforces particular concepts. The organizational units of the scope and sequence chart are the areas of content derived from the major objectives of the curriculum. To facilitate the presentation of the curriculum, these areas of content have been separated from the objectives: the nature of the language, vocabulary, the composing process, and the conventions of written language. However, in classroom practice complete integration of the objectives of this curriculum with every other segment of the elementary school curriculum is necessary and strengthens not only the program in composition but also every other part of the curriculum. Learning to express ideas with ease and accuracy, to be independent in the process, to suit writing to purpose and intended reader is to find satisfaction in the process of writing. To value and understand the process is to acquire sound attitudes toward the product and to cherish the process of writing for its contributions to other areas of subject matter in the curriculum and to the total development of the learner.

CHAPTER XVI

OBJECTIVES OF THE CURRICULUM IN WRITTEN COMPOSITION

Essential to the development of individuals who are aware of the world and their place in it, individuals who will use the tool of language to examine knowledge and to direct changes in society, is the ability to compose in written language. Because language and cognitive development is dependent upon physical, intellectual, and social development, the curriculum in written composition may well become the thread that unifies other areas of the elementary school curriculum.

Both the all-encompassing goal--to express ideas effectively in written language--and the specific contributory objectives that will be discussed in this chapter can be achieved only when the skills of communication are recognized and emphasized as the key factor in the child's total cognitive development. The objectives of this curriculum in written composition have been derived from a consideration of (1) the social nature of language, (2) the psychology of language and language learning, (3) the nature and structure of language, and (4) the nature of the composing process. Eight major objectives indicate the kinds of behavior changes expected. More specific objectives related to each major goal define and augment the major objectives. Since each major goal represents a behavior that is developmental--not one is an all or none behavior, in the final curriculum design appropriate standards of achievement for various levels of development will be subsumed under each major objective.

The first objective is that the learner draws upon himself and his world for the content of his writing. He expresses in language his response to a wide variety of sensory stimuli. Through language he responds to real and vicarious experiences, reflecting his active relations with people, pets, places--whatever he encounters. With some he identifies and evidences satisfaction in expressing his response to them. He seeks opportunities to share the emotional response, the heightened awareness, that comes when the imagination goes beyond what is read or heard or seen. Equally important he records factual information with clarity and accuracy and values such writing as a measure of his own competence to order his experiences. At every level of development he derives satisfaction from using his experiences, real and vicarious, and his thoughts and feelings about these experiences to make each writing a unique and personal expression.

Second, the learner uses in his writing a continuously expanding expressive vocabulary. The very young child will ask questions as he seeks to increase his understanding of words. As he matures, he will use skillfully oral and written contextual clues. The child's natural interest in words and propensity for unconventional morphology and metaphorical language sometimes enables him to use fresh and poetic expressions, expressions to be treasured. An expanding vocabulary is evident when the learner defines words as he considers them in the writing process and when he consciously ponders the connotative appropriateness of words as he writes or revises. Eventually he recognizes the dictionary as a tool for the verification of various kinds of information about words and uses it when he needs to. Consciously, as he writes, he seeks the right word--precise and appropriate always, usually as specific as possible, perhaps fresh and colorful. He recognizes the difference between literal and figurative language and uses both, aware that figurative language is useful not only for expressing ideas clearly but also for expressing thoughts that cannot be expressed in literal language. An adequate expressive vocabulary is the means by which one communicates to himself as well as to others. Concern with the right words then is actually concern with ordering experiences, examining them, and communicating the results.

Third, in the process of writing, the child uses all of the basic sentence patterns. Moreover he varies his sentences by experimenting with various structural components. In his effort to improve the accuracy and effectiveness of his expression of ideas, he varies syntactic structure for specific rhetorical effects and chooses structures appropriate to the content and purpose of his writing. In connected discourse he presents ideas in accordance with his plan for presentation and uses appropriate transitional devices to express relationships among ideas. He recognizes that oral and written language are characterized by different structures, by different rhetorical devices, and different conventions. Optimum verbal and cognitive development entails using both with confidence and flexibility. Although in his speech the normal child of five uses the basic sentence patterns of his environment, he needs much practice in speech and in writing if he is to develop sufficient skill in expanding, generating, and manipulating sentences to express increasingly complex and subtle ideas with clarity and effectiveness. Because he values clarity and effectiveness in writing, he accepts the task of revising his writing when there is time and need to concentrate on the finished product, the composition. Properly motivated revision allows him to examine, evaluate, and improve every aspect of his communication.

The fourth objective is concerned as much with the child's ability to think as with his ability to communicate: he perceives relationships among aspects of his experiences *and uses language to express and to shape the concept system by which he orders his experiences and represents his world*. With little guidance the child may group phenomena on the basis of similarity, but he may need help in naming and in making statements that define or describe the group or class. Such experiences allow him to understand similar statements by others, for he recognizes the basis for such statements in a process of generalization like his own. Still further development is evidenced when he can predict and state new outcomes by relating former generalizations to new situations. Moreover, in learning experiences which require moving from factual to conjectural statements, the child learns to use tentative statements appropriately and to learn the necessity of qualifying certain kinds of statements. Certainly the perceiving of relationships among aspects of his experience is a mental process, but it is, at least for all practical purposes, linked with the verbalization by which the concept system is shaped or expressed. The concept system, in turn, interprets each new experience, though it may change even as it interprets. It seems reasonable to assume that the ability to generate ideas, to perceive relationships, and to understand one's world enables a child to order ideas and to communicate them with satisfaction. Moreover, since in seeking to communicate effectively, he shapes and clarifies his ideas, the very process of writing extends, modifies, and expands the concept system.

Fifth, the child develops an understanding of language as a social institution, recognizes the role of written language in society, and accepts the responsibility of writing in keeping with this role. As a social institution, language has various patterns of usage, each appropriate to specific situations. Almost without thinking, one varies his speech patterns to suit different occasions and different purposes, but to use skillfully the patterns and conventions of writing requires conscious effort. The child who is aware of different language patterns will note the characteristics of his own various levels of usage and in his writing employ various patterns for specific effects. An understanding of the arbitrary and systematic nature of language engenders freedom in experimenting with modes of expression and willing compliance with conventional usages, each as it contributes to the purpose for writing. Appreciation of the social nature of language fosters interest in relating current language to its historical antecedents and to an understanding of the interdependence of language, thought, and human action in his own experiences and in those of others, even those distant in place and time.

Sixth, the learner writes effectively at levels of competency commensurate with his level of ability. The tasks posed by the act of writing remain remarkably similar though the age and skill of the writer, the subject, the length or other formal requirements of the writing vary widely. The writer must define his purpose and his audience and then choose and organize content in terms of purpose. In the act of writing the purpose, content, and potential reader determine--consciously or unconsciously--tone, structure, point of view, and diction. For the young writer, particularly, carefully defined purpose and potential reader set the stage for a satisfactory writing experience. Moreover, purpose and potential reader provide an acceptable frame of reference for the learner in establishing appropriate criteria by which to judge his work. Revision then is meaningful, for it is the means of making his work measure up to the standards demanded by his own initial purpose. The accomplishing of that which was planned is a rewarding experience. Not alone the finished composition but also the entire writing process can be a deeply satisfying achievement, the kind of achievement that lifts the learner's sights even as he feels the glow of success.

Seventh, the student acquires habits of independence in the process of writing. He realizes that content is the something to be bodied forth for a potential reader according to his purpose. He recognizes the need for information, factual or evaluative, and learns to acquire information from appropriate sources. Further, he uses written language to order his information: to formulate ideas, to state hypotheses, to present data, and to draw conclusions. Furthermore, he uses with integrity facts and opinions from various sources as they serve his purposes in writing.

Finally, the learner acquires skill in using the conventions usually associated with written language. Such conventions include spelling, punctuation, capitalization, penmanship, and standard procedural forms, such as margin, bibliography, and various kinds of letters. However, just as he may vary from standard language patterns for specific effects, he may deliberately deviate from conventional spelling, punctuation, or manuscript format when such variations serve the purpose of a particular writing. He values and uses the conventions of written language as aids to effective communication.

Both the major and specific objectives are summarized in the following outline:

OBJECTIVES FOR A CURRICULUM
IN WRITTEN COMPOSITION

1.	Draws upon himself and his world for the content of his writing.	a.	Engages in a rich variety of experiences and expresses in his writing his response to them.
		b.	Expresses in his writing his response to a wide variety of sensory stimuli.
		c.	Responds in his writing to living beings in real and vicarious experiences, his active relations with them, and his identification with their feelings and situation.
		d.	Includes in his writing factual knowledge about specific elements of his environment and attributes of himself.
		e.	Uses writing in dealing with various aspects and subject-matter of the curriculum.
		f.	Seeks appropriate opportunities to share his experiences in writing.
2.	Uses in his writing a continuously expanding expressive vocabulary.	a.	Uses in the process of writing all approaches to the study of words as appropriate to the writing problem.
		b.	Formulates simple and extended definitions of words as he considers using them in writing.

	c. Chooses words appropriate in denotation and connotation and to context in which he is using them.
	d. Recognizes the dictionary as a tool for verification of precise meaning and uses it when he needs to.
	e. Recognizes the difference between literal and figurative language and uses both effectively.
	f. Evidences the process of writing his curiosity about words and combinations of words.
3. In the process of writing and revising, uses easily and flexibly the structure of the English language.	a. Uses the various structural patterns of the English sentence.
	b. Varies his writing by experimenting with the structural components of the English sentence.
	c. Varies syntactic structure to improve the accuracy and effectiveness of his writing.
	d. Develops connected discourse through the use of sentence structures suitable for the expression of the thought content.
	e. Uses appropriate transitional devices to express relationships among ideas in connected discourse.
	f. Recognizes the characteristics of written language which distinguish it from oral, and develops confidence in his use of the structures of both.

4. Perceives relationships among aspects of his experiences and uses language to express and to shape the concept system by which he orders his experience and represents his world.	a. Perceives relationships among aspects of his experiences and expresses them in language.
	b. Groups phenomena on the basis of similarity, and seeks language to name, define, or describe the group or class.
	c. Formulates for himself statements about a class of phenomena, and understands a similar statement made by others through recognizing its basis in a process of generalization like his own.
	d. Uses statements about a class to locate and identify new instances of the class.
	e. Formulates appropriately tentative statements about phenomenon on the basis of membership in a class.
	f. Predicts and states new outcomes by relating former generalizations to new situations.
	g. Uses tentative statements in expressing his curiosities and partly formed ideas.
5. Develops an understanding of language as a social institution, recognizes the role of written language in society, and accepts the responsibility of writing in keeping with this role.	a. Distinguishes between the patterns of usage in informal and conversational situations and the patterns appropriate to the purposes and conventions of writing.
	b. Uses the peculiar characteristics of written

		language as substitutes for the auditory and visual components of face-to-face situations.
	c.	Accepts the arbitrary and systematic nature of language, and complies with its conventions as his purpose requires.
	d.	Recognizes and appreciates the variations in language used by different individuals and groups, and uses this knowledge in improving the effectiveness of his written communication.
	e.	Values his own informal language and uses it in writing for specific effects.
	f.	Reveals interest in relating current language to its historical antecedents.
	g.	Recognizes the interdependence of language, thought, and human action in his own experiences and those of others, different in place and time.
6. Writes effectively at levels of competency commensurate with his level of ability.	a.	Defines his purpose for writing.
	b.	Organizes the content in terms of purpose.
	c.	Selects form, vocabulary, and structure in terms of purpose, content, and potential reader.
	d.	Judges quality of his work, using appropriate criteria.

	e. Revises his writing in terms of accepted criticism.
	f. Values the product that represents his best effort.
	g. Reveals increasing competency in writing.
7. Acquires habits of independence in the process of writing.	a. Recognizes the need for information in the process of composing.
	b. Uses appropriate sources of information.
	c. Uses written language to order content: to formulate ideas, to state hypotheses, to present data, and to draw conclusions.
	d. Uses with integrity facts and opinions from various sources as they serve his purposes in writing.
8. Uses appropriate conventions associated with the writing act.	a. Spells, punctuates, and capitalizes in agreement with accepted forms.
	b. Follows standard procedures in form: margins, bibliography, letters, and the like.
	c. Forms letters in manuscript and in cursive writing in conventional ways.
	d. Deviates from conventions deliberately for specific effects.

These then are the general objectives of the curriculum in written composition: draws upon himself and his world for the content of his writing; uses in his writing a continuously expanding expressive vocabulary; in the process of writing and revising, uses easily and flexibly the structure of the English language; perceives relationships among aspects of his experiences and uses language to express and to shape the concept system by which he orders his experiences and represents his world; develops an understanding of language as a social institution, recognizes the role of written language in society, and accepts the responsibility of writing in keeping with this role; writes effectively at levels of competency commensurate with his level of ability; acquires habits of independence in the process of writing; uses appropriate conventions associated with the writing act. These behaviors characterize one who expresses himself fluently and effectively in written composition.

It is important to note that the objectives are concerned with such matters as the learner's understandings about the nature of language, his reactions to his world, and the nature of the writing process. These understandings are basic to optimum development in the use of written language and to personal development. This curriculum is predicated upon the belief that good writing results from awareness that the putting of words together to express ideas is but the snowcap on the mountain. The effectiveness of the snowcap, indeed that the snowcap is there at all, depends on factors that lie deep in the individual and on experiences that spread backward to the very beginning of his existence and outward to every part of his world. Equally important to those individual factors and experiences over which the teacher has no control are those that may be compared to the atmospheric conditions that make possible the snowcap, the factors and experiences which the teacher can use to nurture the snowcap. The curriculum in written composition then must accommodate those factors that exist, that yield to change very, very slowly, and manipulate those which the teacher can use efficaciously.

CHAPTER XVII

THE SCOPE OF THE CURRICULUM IN WRITTEN COMPOSITION KINDERGARTEN THROUGH GRADE SIX

The curriculum in written composition is designed to identify areas of learning related to content, to the process of composing, to the aspects of composition, and to the evaluation of the progress of students toward the attainment of the objectives. The materials developed to provide for inductive learning use the areas of content outlined below as the chief organizing elements. In each area of content, understandings to be developed are specified.

The materials incorporated in guides to classroom teaching emphasize each of the content areas in some form at each grade level, and the placement of learning experiences is guided by reference to the objectives and to the understandings to be developed. Emphasis is varied as suitable to the level of language development of children at each grade. Kindergarten experiences begin with whatever language ability has been attained, and learning is largely anticipatory to later emphasis on content. When readiness for learning a concept has reached an appropriate level, a period of direct emphasis is included. After the unit of planned emphasis is completed, experiences are designed to maintain and reinforce the learning accomplished. At a later period, a suitable level of mastery leads to direct teaching for expansion and systematic summary of the content area. It can be predicted that these alternate periods of expansion and maintenance of a concept, skill, attitude, or interest will continue throughout the life of the user of language.

Supporting the teaching materials are resource materials on each of the areas of content developed to provide for the teacher information and understanding related to the teaching materials. A separate guide for each grade level incorporates the teaching materials considered appropriate to each grade in each of the content areas.

I. Sources of content for written composition

The content of written composition encompasses all writing experiences of the child and the curriculum materials are designed to improve his ability in the whole range of composition from the strictly factual to the entirely fanciful, to draw upon the full range of his experiences, and to meet the demands for writing expected to be made of the literate person.

A. Understandings to be developed

1. Everything that a person has experienced, thought, or felt is a source of material for composition.

2. Through reading, listening, and observing, a person can learn about and participate in experiences that he has not and cannot have directly.

3. Through imagination a person can extend his experiences.

B. Content emphasized in the curriculum

1. Direct experiences through the senses including experiences in which the child
   - observes his individual experiences
   - observes objects and events at school
   - observes relations between persons
   - observes himself and others
   - plans and observes his own activity
   - observes persons, objects, and events related to planned activities.

2. Vicarious experiences including those in which the child
   - observes through films, filmstrips, television, and other audio-visual media
   - listens to accomplish various purposes
   - reads to accomplish various purposes
   - uses reference materials
   - examines language used in his own speech and writing
   - examines language used in selections read for various purposes.

3. Imaginative experiences including those in which the child
   - spontaneously draws upon direct and vicarious experiences to create new experiences which he chooses to express in writing
   - is encouraged by the teacher to draw upon his direct and vicarious experiences to create new experiences and to express them in writing.

II. Structure of written composition

The unit of expression is determined by the unit of experience the writer wishes to relate and, in turn, determines the relationships required among the elements of the composition. Consequently, efforts to improve expression proceed from a consideration of the total unit of expression, the whole composition, to a consideration of relations among the paragraphs required to present the idea and among the sentences in each paragraph. The appropriate use of transitional devices is required to establish meaningful relationships among the parts of the composition.

A. Understandings to be developed

1. Each composition is prepared for a specific purpose for a specific audience.
2. There are different purposes for writing; in a single composition several purposes may be involved in support of a major purpose.
3. The purpose and the audience determine the choice of topic, vocabulary, and form.
4. A composition is a unit of expression which has an identifiable structure.
5. The choice of appropriate language is the means by which the writer attains accuracy of expression, establishes the level of generalization, and varies the level of usage.
6. The combination of all elements of a composition result is a style peculiar to the individual.

B. Content emphasized in the curriculum

1. Identification of the writer, purpose, and audience
2. Study of the composition as a whole
3. Paragraphs within the whole
4. Sentences within the paragraphs
5. Transitional devices

III. Forms of discourse

A. Understandings to be developed

1. Composing requires the use of recognizable forms.
2. The same ideas may be expressed in a variety of forms.

B. Content emphasized in the curriculum

1. Personal letters
2. Business letters
3. Stories
4. Plays
5. Poems
6. Essays
7. Factual reports

IV. Vocabulary development

A. Understandings to be developed

1. Meanings of words derive from the context in which they are used.

    2. Words and combinations of words may symbolize varying degrees of generalizations.
    3. Words and combinations of words may have figurative as well as literal meanings.
    4. The dictionary is one source of help in understanding word meaning.
    5. Words have histories; knowing the history of a word enhances its meaning and increases the understanding of subtleties of use.

  B. Content emphasized in the curriculum

    1. Literal use of language: defining
    2. Figurative use of language
    3. Use of the dictionary
    4. History of the English language

V. The nature of language

  A. Understandings to be developed

    1. Language is symbolic.
    2. Language is sound; written language is symbolization of sound.
    3. Language is arbitrary; it is a system of set patterns in which relationships are indicated by various kinds of structural signals.
    4. Language changes.
    5. Language has dialects.
    6. Usage is determined by the acceptability of the chosen language to the group with which it is used.
    7. Language permits the development of generalizations and abstractions.

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V. The nature of language

A. --

B. Content emphasized in the curriculum

1. Morphology
2. Syntax - Sentence Patterns
3. Usage
4. Dialects

VI. Conventions observed in written composition

The conventions of written language have meaning in relation to their use to facilitate expression. Specific elements become meaningful when the writer has found sufficient instances in his own writing to make them necessary to the clarity of his writing. The conventions are introduced to relation to writing experiences of the child and are not taught independently of his writing.

A. Understandings to be developed

  1. The conventions of written expression are practices agreed upon in language communities to facilitate communication through written language.

  2. Puncutation is a partial representation in written language of the stress, pitch, and juncture of spoken language.

  3. Spelling is related to the sounds of the language.

B. Content

  1. Punctuation

  2. Capitalization

  3. Spelling

  4. Form of manuscript

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ABSTRACT

ECSC 1. Book One, Foundations for a Curriculum in Written Composition, establishes a theoretical base from contributions of several disciplines: anthropology, sociology, psychology, and linguistics. It is concerned with the process as well as the product of writing and projects a methodology that draws upon the various subject fields in the elementary grades. It attempts to explain how this particular curriculum reveals its designers' sensitivity to the nature of the society it serves, the nature of the learners, and the nature of the discipline, embracing concepts from many fields and the relationships these concepts have to written composition.